THE HISTORY OF NED EVANS.

THE

HISTORY

OF

NED EVANS.

"O'erstep not the modesty of Nature!"

SHAKESPEARE.

SECOND EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

M.DCC.XCVII.

47
5 7
64

THE

HISTORY

OF

NED EVANS.

CHAP. LIII.

AS they approached the peninſula, on which Charleſtown is ſeated, every object became intereſting. Ned could not help obſerving how the benign influence of peace was already become viſible. The Quarter-houſe, which is ſituated near the neck which connects this peninſula with the interior country, and which during the war had been converted into a fortified ſtation, now returned to its original deſtination, and was again a houſe of public entertainment and rural reſort. The charm-

ing villas which had been profuſely ſcattered through the ſurrounding natural garden, which had been either conſumed by fire, or ſuffered to moulder in neglect, were now everywhere re-erecting their ornamented fronts, whilſt the redoubts and the paliſadoes were in their turn condemned to the conſuming element. The cheerful ſongs of new-born liberty ſucceeded to the ſhrill ſcreaming of the fife or the deep thunder of the hollow drum. The pale phantoms of hatred and terror were removed from every brow, and in their place ſat confidence and contentment. Even the birds, which the perpetual roar of muſquetry and cannon had baniſhed from the groves, were now reſuming their native ſeats, and pouring forth their liquid lays to liſtening nature. A ſympathetic cheerfulneſs won upon our travellers, who, as they felt the comforts of their ſituation, and reflected by whoſe civility and kindneſs they enjoyed it, were tempted to rejoice in the miſcarriage

riage of their expedition, which ſecured to their amiable friends the enjoyment of thoſe unalienable rights which a brave man would rather periſh than ſurrender. At length they arrived ſafe in town, and were ſet down at thoſe lodgings which Mrs. Fanſhaw had occupied ever ſince her firſt arrival. The good landlady, who was an American, but who lived unmoleſted while the Britiſh were in poſſeſſion, was rejoiced to ſee Ned return, whom ſhe had long ſuppoſed to have been killed, and often lamented as an amiable youth whom it was a pity Fate had not ſpared to his friends; and ſhe manifeſted her joy in a manner that entitled her to Ned's gratitude and beſt opinion. But the richeſt cordial ſhe could have brought, ſhe now preſented, which was a packet from the commander in chief, containing ſeveral letters from Europe, among which were two for Edward, ſent at a venture by the two perſons deareſt to him on earth, Lady Cecilia and his father.

On opening this packet, Captain Fanſhaw perceived it was written by the general's aide-du-camp, to the following purport:

"New York, Auguſt 17, 1783.

"SIR,

"I am ordered by the commander in chief to inform you, that in conſequence of preliminary articles for a general peace having been ſigned at Paris, the Britiſh forces are ordered home, and that your regiment is already embarked. His excellency deſires me to forward to you the encloſed letters, which have lately been ſent from Europe under cover to him; particularly requeſting to know if there is any account of Mr. Evans, who we underſtand was ſurpriſed when wounded by a marauding party of Indians, and taken priſoner. We deeply lament the fate of this young and gallant officer, but are ſtill not without hopes of his being yet living, and ſhall rejoice to find

find thoſe hopes verified. I remain, with reſpect, Sir,

Your obedient ſervant,
CHAS. PHILMORE."

When Ned received his letters, the conteſt between love and duty did not let him for ſome time determine which to open firſt. He went into a room by himſelf, and firſt broke the ſeal of that from Wales:—but before he read two lines he opened that from Lady Cecilia; and when he ſaw her ſignature, he preſſed it to his lips, whilſt the palpitation of his heart ſet his whole frame trembling, and hardly permitted him to breathe. At length he recovered calmneſs to read the following words:

"Ravenſdale, April 15, 1783.

"MY EVER DEAR FRIEND!

"With what pleaſure ſhould I ſit down to execute my father's orders in writing to you this letter, if I could be certain it

would ever reach you, or, alas! if I could even be aſſured that you were yet living to receive it; but when I reflect on the murderous hands into which you are fallen, my heart dies within me, and my frighted imagination preſents you in a ſituation too horrible to relate. Ever ſince we have heard of your unhappy captivity, I have not ceaſed to weary heaven with prayers to ſhut the lions' mouths, and deliver you from the fangs of thoſe ferocious tigers. I truſt they will be heard: and in the hope of that event, and of the poſſibility that this may find you, I unite with my dear father in expreſſing our cordial thanks to you for your kind attention to my ever lamented brother, who, we know, breathed out his gallant ſoul in your arms. Oh, Edward! what a loſs was there!—My father, with all his reſignation, feels it through every fibre of his heart, and contemplates in tears for hours together his picture which hangs in the library. Nor is this the only loſs

which

which I fear he will have to mourn:—my poor brother Rivers is now at the Hot-Wells of Briſtol, in a very declining ſtate, worn out in the very prime of his life, by that laborious purſuit of pleaſure which ſeems to be the madneſs of the age. The weight of theſe misfortunes hangs heavy on my father, and will, I fear, bring down his grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave. He has loſt all his ſpirits, ſees no company but Doctor Burton, whoſe ſoothing manners and truly apoſtolic piety are well ſuited to the preſent melancholy turn of his thoughts. Oh, Edward! were you here, you might ſee the inefficacy of worldly pomp to beſtow happineſs. But I know you have not this leſſon to learn—your good father's humble roof ſhewed me the manſions in which true happineſs loves to dwell, and which I often contemplate with the moſt grateful recollection. I had a letter from the dear good man lately, and have the pleaſure to tell you, both he and

your mother are well. Captain Nettlefield, who ſince the peace has lately come home, called here the other day. My poor brother George let us know enough of his affair with you to make me hate him, as far as I can hate any thing—he did not riſe in my favour by his viſit. He talked ſo long of your imprudence in ſuffering yourſelf to be ſurpriſed—the impoſſibility of your eſcaping, if you ſhould be alive—and the far greater probability of your being ſcalped and roaſted to death, that I verily believe the wretch wiſhed it might be ſo: it threw my father into violent agitation, and I begged of him not to dwell on a ſubject which nobody that knew you could hear without the deepeſt affliction, and which my father's ſpirits could not at that time bear. He bowed ſubmiſſion; but a ſelf-complacent ſmile ſufficiently ſhewed how glad he was to have that theme to torment me with. Now I talk of torments, I have happily got rid of one, which is my odious Lord Squanderfield:

derfield: he has actually married Harriet Burton, much againſt her father's inclination; but her mother countenanced it, and ſhe was independent. She expects to come back here ſoon lady lieutenant, and his lordſhip is actually talked of for the office; but if he ſhould be appointed, I ſhall have a ſtrange opinion of our rulers. I, for my part, would not truſt him with the government of my lap-dog; and ſurely I ſhall think the nation ſunk indeed that is put under his ſubjection.

"Adieu, my dear Edward! May God grant you a ſafe deliverance from the hands of your enemies, and reſtore you to the prayers of the moſt faithful and affectionate of your friends,

CECILIA RIVERS!"

"Bleſſed name!" cried Edward as he kiſſed the ſignature: "lie there next my heart till I ſee what my dear father ſays." With which words he hurried the letter

into his boſom, and then read that from Wales:

"Ti-gwin, April 12, 1783.

"MY DEAR EDWARD!

"It is not eaſy for me to expreſs with what emotions of heart I ſit down to write to you at this time, not knowing whether you are any longer to be numbered among the living; hoping the beſt, yet tortured with the apprehenſion that thoſe fell tigers in human ſhape, to whom the inſcrutable decrees of Providence have delivered you, may have long ere this imbrued their murderous hands in your heart's blood. Yet if the unceaſing prayers of a heart humbly devoted to the will of its Creator; if the torrents of tears ſhed by your poor mother in the agonies of her ſoul, can avail any thing at the throne of mercy, you may yet be ſafe, and we again be bleſſed with folding you to our hearts. The very idea cheers my

my ſoul, and ſomething ſeems to whiſper to me, 'Be of good comfort!' Many indeed are the comforts which the good providence of God has indulged to me in every ſtage of my being; among which none of the leaſt is that diſintereſted friendſhip with which the noble and excellent Lady Cecilia Rivers condeſcends to honour us. Oh my Edward! it is to you (under Heaven) that I am indebted for this bleſſing, and that our declining years are placed by the generous Lord Ravenſdale beyond the preſſure or apprehenſions of diſtreſs. His bounty is ſecured to us for life, and as regularly paid as the day comes round on which it is due. What pity is it that his noble lineage is in danger of being extinct in the male line! We know in whoſe arms the gallant Captain breathed his laſt; and it is with extreme grief we hear his Lordſhip's eldeſt, and now only ſon, Lord Rivers, is too likely ſoon to follow, being at this time in the laſt ſtage of a rapid and

deep decline. Amidſt this gloomy intelligence it will be ſome comfort to inform you (if, alas! you can yet be informed of any thing) that your mother and I continue to enjoy the bleſſing of uninterrupted health, and that we have no wiſh unaccompliſhed but to ſee you, and know that you are happy.

"Were I ſure that this letter would ever reach you, I might perhaps extend it, and tell you ſome anecdotes that would amuſe you; but I muſt keep them till I have the great felicity to ſee you, if indeed ſo happy an hour is ſtill reſerved for me upon earth. I muſt not, however, omit acquainting you that Miſs Watkin is married to Mr. Colebrook of Aſhfield, and that ſhe is likely ſoon to be a mother. Another female you were intereſted in is the mother of a very thriving boy, who ſhall not want the protection of him who remains

Your ever affectionate father and friend,

EVAN EVANS."

"P. S.

"P. S. David Morgan's friends are well. It was from his letter we were firſt acquainted with your diſaſter, which he very feelingly lamented; and we are all well pleaſed with his attachment to you."

It was ſome time before Ned could calm the tranſports which theſe letters conveyed to his ſoul. Happineſs flowed in upon him with ſo full a tide, that he was in danger of forgetting it could ever ebb again, if the recollection that there were ſtill five thouſand miles of ocean to be paſſed before he could behold the dear objects of his affection had not occurred to his mind, and a little damped that ardour with which he fancied himſelf juſt going to throw himſelf into their arms. A ſerene joy, however, glowed in his heart, and diffuſed itſelf over his countenance; which was inſtantly taken notice of by the Captain and Mrs. Fanſhaw, as ſoon as he returned to them. They too had received pleaſing intelligence from

their

their friends in Ireland, particularly from the good alderman in Cork, who was highly delighted with the termination of the war, however lucrative it had been to him; but lamented the change in his daughter Lucy's diſpoſition, who ſeemed to have loſt all the uſual gaiety and cheerfulneſs of her temper, and to give herſelf wholly to thought and retirement. They were no ſtrangers to the cauſe of this change, which never was reflected on by one of them without the tendereſt emotions: but this day was not a time to indulge in melancholy, the recollection of which they baniſhed by introducing hope, and eagerly looking forward to the hour (not far diſtant, as they imagined) when the green hills of Ireland, or the white cliffs of Albion, ſhould delight their eyes, riſing out of the deep, and inviting them to the enjoyment of love, liberty, and peace.—To the ſpeedy arrival of this happy hour! the Captain and Edward poured a libation of excellent

excellent Madeira; and Ned having recovered all thoſe things he left in his old lodgings, particularly the picture of Lady Cecilia, given him by poor Captain Rivers, he returned in the evening to Captain Fanſhaw's, and lodged in the ſame houſe with him until the fleet of merchantmen which were bound for Europe, and ready to ſail with the firſt fair wind, ſhould put to ſea.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIV.

IT was not many days before this wiſhed-for breeze ſprung up; and on Wedneſday the third of September, about eleven in the forenoon, they embarked on board the good ſhip Columbus, Captain William Hatter, bound for London: but the harbour of Cork being nothing out of the way, the captain, who was alſo part owner of the veſſel, promiſed to touch there, and land them at the Cove. The veſſel was laden chiefly with rice and indigo; and about three o'clock the pilot left them, having ſeen them ſafe over the bar. The day was fine, and the wind fair; and they continued upon deck gazing at the receding land, till the ſpire of St. Michael's, the laſt object viſible, ſunk in the waves. As the evening advanced they retired to the cabin, where Captain Hatter

Hatter had tea and coffee ready for them; and his ſon, who was his mate, and had a good voice, ſung ſeveral ſea ſongs; and the evening paſſed agreeably, till, the motion of the ſhip increaſing, they perceived they had reached the gulph ſtream, when Mrs. Fanſhaw and the children retired to their births; but the gentlemen, not being affected with any ſickneſs, ate a good ſupper, and joined with the Captain and his ſon in drinking a bowl of punch to a happy ſight of the Cove, and the further ſucceſs of the voyage! Before morning they were clear of the gulph, and, with a fair wind and ſmooth ſea, proceeded as proſperouſly as hearts could wiſh. Every day at noon, when their obſervation was made, they traced their courſe upon the map, and ſaw with pleaſure every hour bringing them nearer to the object of their hopes. Oh! happy ignorance! which hides with an impenetrable veil the events of futurity, and ſuffers not the hour of diſtreſs

treſs to afflict us before our time! They had now been twenty-ſeven days at ſea, during which time they had for the moſt part favourable winds, which allowed them continually to ſtand their courſe: ſo that, according to their reckoning, they had run down above 40 degrees of longitude, and were rejoicing in the comfortable proſpect of ſeeing their friends in about two weeks more. But on the evening of the laſt day of September the wind ſhifted to the ſouth-eaſt, and the ſun ſet in ſuch a dark and troubled bank as intimated an approaching ſtorm. The vigilance of the captain and the crew was not wanting to prepare for it: the top-gallant maſts were taken down; the topmaſt lowered; the ſails reefed, and every thing put in the beſt trim poſſible. Mean time it grew profoundly dark—the winds whiſtled through the ſhrouds—and the rumbling of the diſtant thunder, every peal growing louder and louder, announced the arrival of the

tempeſt.

tempeſt. The ſea now rolled like mountains, the ſummits of which, brightened by the vivid flaſhes of the lightning, ſhone luminous on the black horizon, and threatened to overwhelm the ſtruggling veſſel in the profound abyſs beneath them. The captain himſelf was at the helm; our paſſengers all cloſed in their births, where ſleep was the leaſt of their thoughts, and where poor Mrs. Fanſhaw and her infants lay terrified almoſt to death. Her affectionate huſband was tenderly leaning over her, and endeavouring to allay her terrors, when, about midnight, a tremendous craſh, accompanied with a dreadful peal of thunder, was heard upon deck. The dreadful cry of "All hands aloft!" intermixed with the prayer of "Lord, ſave us, or we periſh!" chilled even the ſtouteſt hearts, and bade them prepare for death. Ned inſtantly went upon deck, but prevailed on Captain Fanſhaw to ſtay below with his family, nothing that they could do being of any uſe even to their perſonal

ſafety.

ſafety. When he got upon deck, he ſaw the danger imminent indeed. The main-maſt had been ſhivered with lightning, and two of the ſailors ſtruck dead. The poor captain was ſtill at the helm endeavouring to keep the veſſel's head to the waves, whilſt his ſon and the ſurviving crew were cutting away the remains of the maſt and clearing them from the ſhrouds. The poor fellows who were ſtruck were ſtowed away by themſelves; and their meſſmates almoſt envied them that they had been ſo ſpeedily relieved from all their terrors. Towards morning the gale abated; but the ſea continuing to run mountains high, the ſhip laboured dreadfully, and made ſo much water that they feared the lightning had done her ſome material damage. The crew was now reduced to ſix mariners, with the captain and his ſon; three male paſ-ſengers, Captain Fanſhaw, Edward, and David Morgan; Mrs. Fanſhaw and her maid, with three children: in all ſixteen ſouls, eleven of whom only could be of

any

any uſe. The weather continued rough and ſqually; and the leak, notwithſtanding that all hands relieved each other conſtantly at the pumps, conſiderably increaſed upon them. Five days did they ſtruggle with theſe diſaſtrous circumſtances, when, finding that notwithſtanding all their labour there were now ſeven feet water in the hold, they gave it over, and a melancholy council was called to ſee what they ſhould do. They computed that they were ſomewhat above 500 miles from Cape Clear in Ireland, and about 400 from the Azores. There were two long boats in the veſſel, one conſiderably larger than the other, but either of them capable to carry all that remained of the company:—but then the hazard of being expoſed in the Atlantic ocean at a ſtormy time of the year, in an open boat, ſcarcely gave them a chance for life; whilſt, on the other hand, the ſhip ſeemed to afford them ſtill leſs, for ſhe was filling faſt with water, and could not, in

their

their opinion, float for four-and-twenty hours longer. Their only chance in her was ſome veſſel heaving in ſight that might diſcover their diſtreſs, and take them on board. As long as this faint hope held out any poſſible proſpect, they determined to wait upon the deck, which alone was now habitable, for the water was two feet deep in the cabin; but a thick fog coming on in the afternoon, this laſt hope was taken away, and nothing remained but to truſt themſelves to the boat. Poor Captain Hatter was advanced in years; and almoſt all that he had in the world being embarked on board this veſſel, he determined never to quit her while ſhe remained above water, and at laſt, if no relief came, to go down with her. His ſon did all he could to make him change this reſolution, but in vain; and when he found him immovably determined, he piouſly and affectionately reſolved to ſhare his fate, let it be what it would, and never to abandon his dear parent

parent in the hour of diſtreſs. All the ſeamen, however, determined for the boat; and the largeſt of them was accordingly launched into the water. The good captain gave them free liberty to take whatever ſtores they could find either in the cabin or from the cargo. The latter was almoſt wholly overwhelmed with water; but from the cabin they got ſome biſcuit and rice, as alſo a caſe of ſpirits and ſome wine. Ned carried with him his muſket and Indian belt, with powder and ammunition: a hogſhead of freſh water was alſo put on board, and a compaſs. The evening was dark and gloomy; and night coming down apace. It was the fifth of October, between four and five in the afternoon, when they departed from the ſhip. Poor Captain Hatter and his ſon ſtood on the quarter-deck, and, with a magnanimity truly heroic, gave them three parting cheers. They were anſwered from the boat with that heartfelt affection which the

the melancholy preſage that they ſhould never meet again in this world would naturally inſpire. As long as light permitted them to ſee, their eyes were mutually turned towards each other; but the increaſing thickneſs of the fog, added to the coming down of night, ſoon cloſed this ſad interview, and ſeparated them for ever. The night, though gloomy, was not boiſterous, and the wind was fair; yet the conſciouſneſs of their forlorn condition, and utter inability to weather any future gale, forbade them to build any ſtrong hope on this favourable circumſtance. Poor Mrs. Fanſhaw, unuſed to difficulties of any kind, and with an infant at her breaſt, was an object of the moſt affecting conſideration. Every attention that was poſſible to be paid to her, ſhe received, not only from her huſband and from Edward, but alſo from the whole crew. Her terror, however, was extreme, and the firſt conſequence of it was her milk going away.

The little innocent, who had as yet known no other food, and who in this ſituation could get no ſubſtitute, fell a ſacrifice to this loſs, and expired in its mother's arms on the ſecond evening of their melancholy voyage.

Though few women poſſeſſed greater ſtrength of mind than Mrs. Fanſhaw, nor any perhaps more perfect reſignation of ſpirit, yet ſhe could hardly be brought to believe that her dear infant was really dead, and would not part with it till its countenance became ſhocking even to herſelf to look on. She at laſt committed it to the deep, but with it all her ſtrength and reſolution. They had been now four days and nights in the midſt of the ocean, in an open boat; and the weather being tolerably favourable, they had not felt any extraordinary inconvenience: but it now turned ſqually again, with heavy ſhowers of rain, which drenched them all to the ſkin. Poor Mrs. Fanſhaw's conſtitution could not ſtand out againſt all theſe

accumulated hardſhips; all that her huſband and Edward could do was not able to ſooth her, nor even induce her to take the refreſhment of a little biſcuit ſoaked in wine. Her thoughts ran entirely on her little daughter whom ſhe had loſt, and ſhe followed her to Paradiſe on the third evening after.

It is not poſſible to expreſs the agony of grief with which poor Captain Fanſhaw beheld the body of this juſtly beloved woman launched into the abyſs, whither he himſelf would certainly have followed, if Edward had not forcibly held him down, and preſented to his arms his two yet ſurviving children. Indeed it was to Edward only theſe poor boys clung now for protection. The youngeſt remembered how he had before ſaved his life, and always ſince looked up to him as a benefactor. But now their unhappy father was ſo overpowered with his affliction, that his reaſon ſeemed affected, and, except when he lay in a ſtate

of

of ſtupid inſenſibility, he kept continually calling for his wife. At laſt he grew outrageous, and it was with infinite difficulty he was ſecured ſo as that he ſhould not throw himſelf overboard.

Hitherto the wind had been pretty favourable; and as they had now run before it for eleven days, the boatſwain, who was conſidered as commander, cheered them with the hope of ſoon ſeeing land. In fact, the next morning they fancied they deſcried it, and began to give a looſe to hope; but thick rain and heavy ſqualls from the ſouth-weſt coming on about noon, theſe hopes were again daſhed, and the greateſt apprehenſions conceived that they ſhould not be able to live through the night. The evening, indeed, ſet in with all the horrors of tempeſtuous darkneſs, in which their only care was to preſerve, if poſſible, the boat from being filled. Poor Captain Fanſhaw lay bound in her bottom, there being no ſafety for him in any other ſtate; and his

two poor boys clung round Edward's knees, in an agony of terror and of affection not to be deſcribed. In this perilous ſituation they ran before the wind for ſome hours, in the midſt of a darkneſs which would not permit them to behold any thing. At laſt one of the men forward cried out, Land!—and preſently the thundering of the breakers appalled every heart—To tack was impoſſible—to go forward almoſt certain death—A huge billow at this inſtant lifted the boat as it were to the ſkies, and, thundering down, ſplit it to pieces on a rock, ſweeping with irreſiſtible force every thing before it.

CHAP.

CHAP. LV.

SELF-preſervation is certainly the firſt principle implanted in every thing that has life. Under the influence of this principle, Ned ſupported himſelf amid the waves as ſoon as he emerged from that which had overwhelmed him. A ſecond ſoon came thundering on in like manner as the former, and bore him forward towards the ſhore:—as it receded back, he felt his feet touch ground, and at the ſame time caught a firm grip of ſea-weed which grew upon a rock; to this he clung, and eſtabliſhed himſelf upon it before the next wave broke over him, which receding in its turn gave him time to breathe. For two hours he clung faſt to this rock, whilſt every wave overwhelmed him with a deluge of ſpray, but left him time to get breath in the in-

tervals of its approach. At laſt, as the tide ebbed out, he became in ſome meaſure relieved from this inundation. Though ſtill wet with the ſpray, the body of the wave did not reach him, and he maintained his poſition on the rock without being in danger of being waſhed off from it. The morning at length dawned, and diſcovered to him an iron coaſt of lofty precipices, round whoſe baſes the Atlantic thundered for ever, though in vain. His ſtation was on a rock detached from the cliff by an interval of about thirty feet, and which had probably at ſome remote period tumbled from the top: at high water it was covered with the tide, which luckily proved his preſervation, as the quantity of ſea-weed with which it was covered at once enabled him to catch a grip of it, and prevented his being much bruiſed when he was thrown upon it. With a ſorrowing yet a thankful heart he caſt a melancholy look around him, but could diſcover no particle of the boat,

boat, nor yet a veſtige of any human being; but as the day advanced, he was himſelf diſcovered from the ſummit of the precipice by ſome fiſhermen who were taking their early rounds along the coaſt, and paſſing to the creeks in which their boats lay. The ſea was ſtill too tempeſtuous for any boat to venture on it; but theſe humane people determined to uſe every exertion to ſave their fellow-creature, taught by their own hazards and misfortunes to ſuccour the diſtreſſed. With this charitable intention, ſome of them were let down from the ſummit of the cliff by ropes faſtened round their middle, and ſecured at top by their comrades, till they found a pretty firm footing nearly on a level with the rock on which Edward lay. He ſoon perceived them; but how to avail himſelf of their humanity was a matter of conſiderable difficulty, as the rock was inſulated by a ſtreight of about thirty feet wide, through which a tempeſtuous ſea was ſtill foaming. After many ineffectual ſtrug-

gles, in which his ſtrength and hope were nearly exhauſted (as the tide was now again coming in), he was at laſt fortunate enough to catch the end of a rope, which he made faſt to a part of the rock on which he lay, whilſt they ſecured it on the other ſide where they ſtood; and having faſtened another rope round his body for ſecurity, the other end of which they held, he warped along the firſt over the chaſm, and was received with joyful huzzas by his generous preſervers. He was, however, ſo exhauſted as to be hardly able to ſtand, and was obliged to be hoiſted up to the top of the cliff without any exertions of his own. A humane lady, who dwelt about half a mile off, in a ſweet ſituation by the ſea-ſide, and who had been early informed of his condition, had ſent a horſe to convey him to her houſe, not knowing but he was a common ſeaman; and had alſo ſent ſome biſcuit and warm wine for a preſent refreſhment. To this hoſpitable lady's he was

conveyed,

conveyed, and had the pleaſure to hear by the way that two more of the crew had been ſaved in a creek, and were taken to ſome of the fiſhermen's houſes, but they did not know their names. When he arrived at the houſe, he was received by an old and faithful man-ſervant of the lady's, who conducted him to a comfortable chamber, in which a warm bed and clean linen were provided for him, the things in the world he ſtood moſt in need of, and where he was ſuffered to repoſe without being as yet troubled with any queſtions; his fatigued and exhauſted ſpirits evidently pointing out the neceſſity of quiet.

Providence, however, in bringing him to this houſe, had committed him to the protection of one who would be more intereſted in his welfare, than either he expected, or ſhe herſelf at preſent knew. The benevolent inhabitant of this pleaſant and retired manſion was Mrs. Mary Waldron, the relict of Doctor Richard Waldron, a

moſt worthy and reſpectable clergyman of the dioceſe of Cork, and mother to that beautiful but unfortunate lady who was married to the late Lord Rivers contrary to the wiſh and approbation of his father, who therefore would never ſee him more. We have before related, that this young and amiable lord had died without having had the happineſs to be reconciled to his parent, leaving his wife big with child; and the lovely widow herſelf lived only to be delivered of a ſon, whom his grandmother Mrs. Waldron never ſaw, happening to be abſent, in the very houſe ſhe then inhabited when her dear daughter Lady Rivers died; and receiving intelligence ſoon after from the preſent Lord Ravenſdale, that the infant had died alſo at nurſe, by which he himſelf became heir to the honours and eſtate of Ravenſdale.

The preſent lord, who was then only Colonel Rivers, but poſſeſſed of a very good fortune, had never approved of the

ſeverity of his brother to his only ſon and the heir of his eſtate; particularly as the beauty and amiable virtues of the lady he had married were ſuch as juſtified any young man, let his quality be ever ſo great, in exalting her to his own rank. He tried therefore, ſincerely, every effort to induce his brother to be reconciled; and when this proved in vain, and that his lordſhip was ſo inexorable as to withdraw alſo his pecuniary allowance, leaving his ſon to ſubſiſt only upon his pay as a captain of dragoons, the colonel had generouſly interfered, and allowed his nephew, out of his own pocket, an annuity of five hundred a-year, two of which was ſecured to Lady Rivers, in caſe ſhe ſhould ſurvive her lord; but in caſe Lord Rivers ſhould ſucceed his father in his titles and eſtate, it was then agreed that he ſhould repay to the colonel or his heirs the amount of the annuity with which he accommodated him. When both Lord Rivers and his amiable

lady died, the whole annuity reverted to Colonel Rivers; but in the ſame letter by which he acquainted Mrs. Waldron with the melancholy account of the ſudden death of her infant grandſon, by which all impediments were removed between himſelf and the ſucceſſion, he endeavoured to mitigate her affliction by the aſſurance that the two hundred a year which he had ſettled upon her daughter, ſhould be ſecured to herſelf during her life, as a token of the great reſpect he had for her memory, and well knowing that her circumſtances were in no reſpect equal to her merits, nor to the ſituation which ſhe had hitherto enjoyed. What the colonel thus generouſly offered he punctually made good, adding a very handſome preſent when he himſelf aſſumed the title of Ravenſdale; and Mrs. Waldron had now for two-and-twenty years conſtantly received her annuity of two hundred pounds, and was ſecured in it by his lordſhip for her life. It is no wonder then

if

if her grateful heart ſhould be deeply attached to his lordſhip and to every perſon he regarded, though as yet ſhe did not know the young man ſhe had then in her houſe was of the number; for indeed ſhe was ignorant of his name, though, had ſhe heard it, ſhe would have been ſtruck with it, for ſhe had paſſed part of this very ſummer at Ravenſdale, whither ſhe often went, and was no ſtranger to the gallant conduct of Evans, nor to the high eſtimation in which he was juſtly held by her noble friends.

The good lady was herſelf a model of every thing amiable, gentle, and humane. Somewhat paſt her grand climacteric, her eyes ſtill beamed with good nature, which ſpread a ſoft luſtre and prepoſſeſſing character over her mild and venerable countenance. Her perſon was rather full, but not inelegantly ſo. Bleſſed with a ſtrong conſtitution, which a contented mind preſerved ſtill unimpaired, ſhe felt but little of the infirmities of age; and her whole

appearance

appearance ſeemed to juſtify the hope that ſhe might ſtill continue for many years to be the delight of her opulent neighbours, and the refuge of thoſe who were diſtreſſed.

The houſe in which ſhe reſided was pleaſantly ſituated at the bottom of a bay which opened to the ſouth, and was defended on each ſide by lofty precipices, whoſe aged baſes were waſhed by the ocean, and where nature appeared in ſome of her moſt auguſt forms. To the north was a hill, the ſummit of which was crowned with a thriving plantation; and along the ſides were ſtretched the gardens ſheltered on all ſides from the winds, but open to the ſun, whoſe genial influence matured the fruits and flowers of the climate to uncommon perfection. Between the houſe and the ſea was a pebbly ſtrand, and through all the neighbourhood a multitude of little ſheltered bays, bounded with rocks and promontories, and adorned with a vaſt

variety

variety of ſhells and corals, and marine plants. The naturaliſt here might have found an inexhauſtible mine of knowledge and amuſement. To this ſtudy her huſband Doctor Waldron had been addicted, which induced him to rent this place from a great proprietor who lived in England, and to make it his favourite reſidence. His widow felt a ſimilar attachment to it, and her life being in the leaſe, ſhe held it for that term. A maiden lady of the name of Walker, ſomewhat younger than Mrs. Waldron, but with ſimilar diſpoſitions, uſually ſpent a great part of the year with her, and was in the houſe at this time. They were both warmly intereſted for the young man who had been ſo ſurpriſingly reſcued from death, and longed to know the particulars of his ſituation; but they would not ſuffer Edward to be diſturbed till he woke of himſelf, though William the ſervant had orders to ſtay conſtantly in the

the chamber, and to get for him whatever he required.

Several hours elapſed before Edward awoke from that deep repoſe into which the great fatigue both of his body and his mind had thrown him. At length he opened his eyes, and at firſt could hardly recollect where he was. Seeing the ſervant, however, he enquired of him to whom he was obliged for his humane and comfortable reception; and when he was informed, he gratified William's curioſity with reſpect to himſelf, who immediately conveyed the tidings to his miſtreſs. Mrs. Waldron was no ſooner acquainted that it was Mr. Evans ſhe had in her houſe, than ſhe immediately went to his chamber, and ſeated herſelf by his bed-ſide, where ſhe was ſatisfied, from his own mouth, that he was the identical Evans ſhe had heard ſo much of at Ravenſdale. "Oh," ſays ſhe, "what bleſſed tidings theſe will be for my good old Lord and my dear Lady Cecilia!"

Cecilia!" Ned would have aſked her a thouſand queſtions relating to them, but ſhe would not ſatisfy him in any. She was afraid of his being taken ill in conſequence of the dreadful hardſhips he had undergone; and it was in vain that Ned aſſured her he was as well as ever he was in his life. She knew, ſhe ſaid, it was impoſſible, and therefore inſiſted upon his lying ſtill and taking his repoſe. She ordered William to get ſome wine whey made, and a piece of dry toaſt. Ned pleaded for a beef-ſteak and ſome potatoes; but this the good lady, who was a notable phyſician, poſitively interdicted, and compelled him to ſubmit to her regimen, which indeed Ned ſaw he could not oppoſe without danger of offending her. He determined, therefore, to obey her for this day, and, in gratitude for her care and attention, to lie ſtill till the morning; but he prevailed on Mrs. Waldron to enquire the names of two others of his unfortunate ſhipmates, who,

he

he underſtood, had been ſaved. It was with true joy he learned that David Morgan was one; the other was the boatſwain: but they were both ſo bruiſed among the rocks, that it would be ſome days before they could be able to move. Poor Captain Fanſhaw, with his two boys, were never heard of more: the maid and five mariners ſhared the ſame fate. Some of the bodies were afterwards thrown aſhore on different parts of the coaſt, and were decently interred: but of all the crew who ſailed from Charleſtown, Ned, David Morgan, and the boatſwain, alone got ſafe to ſhore.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVI.

THE next morning proved fine, and Ned (reſolved not to be again compelled to an unneceſſary indolence) roſe at an early hour, and prevailed upon William to conduct him to the cottages where Morgan and the boatſwain were lodged. He found the poor fellows ſtill very ſore from their bruiſes, but in a fair way to get better; and Morgan in particular, deeply impreſſed with a grateful ſenſe of the mercy of his deliverance, and hardly leſs thankful for that of his maſter than his own. He returned by the coaſt ſide, and, as he viewed the rock on which he had been thrown, admired by what miraculous providence he had been enabled to retain his ſtation on it. A tender recollection of the Fanſhaws, with whom he had lately been ſo happy,

happy, and over whoſe cold and ſcattered remains the ocean he was now contemplating rolled its billows, drew from his breaſt a ſympathetic ſigh, not unaccompanied with a friendly tear, the laſt and only tribute he could pay to their memory. The living now claimed his attention; and therefore he bent his way back to Mrs. Waldron's, whom he found waiting for him to breakfaſt, and under ſome uneaſineſs that he had ventured ſo ſoon abroad. The good lady, however, ſoon baniſhed her apprehenſion, when ſhe beheld the demolition he cauſed in her hot loaf and butter, the ruddy colour of his cheek, and the animated luſtre of his eye. Indeed, the activity of his Indian life had ſtrung all his nerves with vigour, and given to every muſcle its moſt perfect contour; ſo that no ſtatuary, even of antiquity, ever produced a more finiſhed model of male beauty, nor any painter a richer glow of apparent health. His dreſs indeed was

nothing

nothing but the jacket and trowſers which he had on when he left the ſhip, for to this his whole wardrobe was reduced; but his perſon did not ſtand in need of ornaments to ſet it off, and never looked more engaging than in the ſimpleſt attire.

Mrs. Waldron could hardly take her eyes off him all the time he ſat at breakfaſt: not that ſhe had any pleaſure in gazing on handſome young men, but ſhe fancied ſhe diſcovered in his countenance a ſtrong reſemblance of her dear daughter, whoſe picture ſhe had hanging at her watch. The ſame idea ſtruck Miſs Walker too; and however fanciful it might be, it ſtill had the effect to conciliate, in a very high degree, Mrs. Waldron's affection, and to intereſt her heart in Edward's welfare much more powerfully than perhaps any other circumſtance could have done. After breakfaſt the ladies invited Ned into the gardens, which, though more laid out for uſe than ornament, were yet charmingly

charmingly diſpoſed, and abounded, even to profuſion, with every fruit that the climate could bring to perfection. The ſeaſon was not yet entirely over for ſome of theſe luxuries; and therefore Mrs. Waldron had ordered ſome of the beſt kinds that remained to be carried to a rural ſeat in the garden, whither ſhe and Miſs Walker conducted Edward; and where, after he had regaled himſelf with ſome nectarines, they requeſted he would entertain them with an account of his adventures.

My indulgent readers, who are already acquainted with the moſt intereſting parts of them, will excuſe me from entering into any new detail of them, and content themſelves with knowing that for upwards of two hours the ladies liſtened with unwearied attention, and ſeemed to take as deep an intereſt in the relation as if they themſelves were ſharers in the events. Mrs. Waldron was particularly pleaſed with the faithful attachment of David Morgan; and

when

when ſhe learned that he alſo had ſurvived the ſhipwreck, and was in her neighbourhood, ſhe determined to have him up to her houſe that very night, and to afford him every comfortable accommodation that was in her power to beſtow. The more ſhe ſaw of Edward, the more deeply did ſhe feel intereſted in whatever befel him; and ſaw, or fancied ſhe ſaw, new likeneſſes to the deceaſed Lady Rivers, who had been the idol of her heart, and every feature of whoſe face, and even the tones of her voice, were ſtill freſh in her recollection. A guitar happening to lie in the parlour-window, Ned chanced to take it up; and turning over a book of old Scotch ſongs which lay beſide it, he lighted on "Will you gang to the ewe-bughts, Marion?" and played it, accompanying it at the ſame time with his voice. It had been a favourite air with Lady Rivers, and the very inſtrument on which he played it had once been hers. Mrs. Waldron at firſt liſtened with

with delight; but, overpowered with the recollection, ſhe burſt into tears, and was obliged to leave the room. Poor Edward was extremely diſconcerted till Miſs Walker explained the cauſe, and then he reſolved to touch no more upon ſuch tender ſtrings whilſt he remained at Glendemus, the name of Mrs. Waldron's houſe. But the ſenſation which Ned's voice excited in that good lady's boſom had more of pleaſure in it than of pain; at leaſt it poſſeſſed that tender melancholy which a gentle and affectionate heart loves to cheriſh. When therefore ſhe returned into the room, ſhe inſiſted on his taking up the inſtrument again, and made him play a variety of tunes, and ſing a number of ſongs, that awoke all her tendereſt recollections, and gratified every feeling of her ſoul. At night, when Edward retired to his chamber, Mrs. Waldron went to that of Miſs Walker. "Well!" ſaid ſhe, "my dear Miſs Walker, what do you think of this young

young man we have got?" "Think of him?" ſaid ſhe, "I think him beyond all compariſon the moſt engaging young fellow I ever ſaw. If I were not ſecured by the hoary wiſdom of ſixty winters, I don't know but my heart would play me a trick." "I can aſſure you, my dear Jenny," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, "he has won mine, yet not in the way of love. O Jenny, he is ſo like my Lætitia!—His eye, his manner, nay his voice brings her ſo ſtrongly to mind, that if the dear infant to whom ſhe imparted life in the moment that ſhe loſt her own, had not ſo ſoon followed its bleſſed mother, I could almoſt be perſuaded this youth was he. He too is Edward, and his age exactly correſponds."—"I confeſs to you, my dear Mrs. Waldron," replied Miſs Walker, "that there are certain turns in Mr. Evans's countenance that do very much remind me of poor Lady Rivers; but that he ſhould be her ſon appears to me ſo romantic, that I am amazed you could

give way to ſuch a ſuppoſition even for a moment. This young man was born in Wales, and never from under his father's eye till about three years ago; and how then can you reconcile ſuch a contradiction?" "My dear Jenny," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, "I do not attempt to reconcile it, or know any thing about it. I never ſaw my grandſon; but this young man is ſo like my daughter, that my heart yearns to him. There is alſo ſomething very extraordinary in his hiſtory. An accident the moſt uncommon introduced him to Lady Cecilia Rivers, who, I am convinced, loves him, and is determined to marry him. Should this take place, and Lord Rivers die, whoſe life is not worth a week's purchaſe, then this young man will heir Ravenſdale, and (except the title) ſtand in my grandſon's place."— "The caſe," replied Miſs Walker, "is extraordinary, but ſtill I cannot poſſibly conceive him to be your grandſon. The

character of Lord Ravenſdale, who is honour and integrity itſelf, makes it impoſſible; and therefore, my dear Mrs. Waldron, I would not mention ſuch a thing for the world, nor even indulge ſuch a hope; but granting the poſſibility of the circumſtance, then Providence ſeems to be in the train to diſcloſe this myſtery; and on this account alſo I would leave it to him, and never hint to human being that I had ſuch a conception, unleſs ſomething much more convincing than the mere circumſtance of reſemblance and coincidence of name ſhould ariſe."—" Your advice, my dear Jenny," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, " is what I perfectly approve, and what indeed my own thoughts ſuggeſted to me. I have the higheſt opinion of Lord Ravenſdale, and certainly owe him an immenſe debt of gratitude. If I feel intereſted in Mr. Evans, as I confeſs I do, his lordſhip does ſo likewiſe; and I well know Lady Cecilia does ſtill more;

ſo that on this head there will be no difference. The events of this young man's life are ſo extraordinary, and the laſt not the leaſt, which has thrown him under the protection of my roof, that I feel my heart entirely at eaſe about him, and that I may ſafely confide him to the guidance of that Almighty Being who ſeems in an eſpecial manner to protect him, and to direct his outgoings and his comings-in; and who no doubt will order all things concerning him with ſtricteſt juſtice and unerring wiſdom." With this pious ſentiment Mrs. Waldron retired to her room, but not to reſt. Her ſpirits had received an impulſe that would not ſuffer them immediately to ſubſide, and through far the greater part of the night agitated her imagination with a thouſand conceptions for and againſt the ſtrange impreſſion ſhe had received. At laſt, wearied with the perplexing contradictions which preſented themſelves whatever ſide of the queſtion ſhe contemplated,

ſhe

ſhe ſunk to reſt, and enjoyed that balmy repoſe which Heaven reſerves for virtuous minds alone, and which frequents the cottage and the truſs of clean ſtraw fully as often as the marble palace and the bed of down.

CHAP. LVII.

IT was not till a late hour that Mrs. Waldron came down to breakfaſt; but Edward, whoſe ſpirits were now buoyant as the air, roſe with the lark, and had amuſed himſelf with wandering among the rocks, and exploring the various bays, with which the ſhores about Glendemus were indented. In one of theſe was a huge cavern, not unaptly termed the cathedral, to the nobleſt of which in the Gothic ſtyle it bore a ſtrong reſemblance. Edward had a horror of caverns ever ſince his adventure in the ſacred cave of Agigua; nevertheleſs, he was tempted to peep in, and was rewarded with a ſpectacle of grandeur, which a lover of the ſublime in nature would have thought ample recompenſe for a long journey. At high water the tide flowed

flowed into the end of this cavern upwards of five hundred feet, and at all times left a pool of the moſt cryſtalline tranſparency for nearly its whole length, and deep enough to float a ſhip. The bottom was formed of ſhells, which through the water appeared of the moſt reſplendent beauty; and all the ſides were lined with moſſes and ſea-plants in boundleſs variety. A bath ſo inviting tempted Edward to ſtrip and plunge in; and being an excellent diver, he got up ſeveral handfuls of the moſt beautiful ſhells, as well as ſpecimens of various moſſes which, he obſerved, Mrs. Waldron had a taſte for; and combined into ſeveral beautiful pieces of ſhell-work, ſo as to reſemble, in the moſt lively manner, grottos, obeliſks, groves, and ruins; as alſo flowers ſo correct as to deceive even upon a near inſpection. He had obſerved ſomewhat of a ſimilar taſte in Lady Cecilia Rivers, and therefore was determined to make uſe of his preſent opportunity to col-

lect a quantity of theſe rarities for her. He intended, indeed, to ſurpriſe her ladyſhip, and throw himſelf at her feet as ſoon as he was in a condition to travel; and only waited the anſwer to his letter to the agent of his regiment in Dublin, and the caſh which he expected from him, to equip himſelf with immediate neceſſaries, for the ſhipwreck had left him nothing but the clothes on his back, and poor Weenacoba's wampum belt, which happened to be about his neck. In the mean time he was in the happieſt quarters in which he could be placed: and every hour endeared him more and more to Mrs. Waldron, whoſe affection could hardly be greater if he really was her grandſon. When he came into the parlour, and ſhewed her his ſhells and moſſes, ſhe knew by his dripping curls where he had been, and gently chid him for venturing alone to ſwim in thoſe deep pools, and among ſlippery rocks. He ſmiled, and aſked her if ſhe would have

one

one of the maids to attend him, ſince ſhe thought he could not take care of himſelf. She ſaid, "No: ſhe did not know whether ſhe would truſt him even with one of the maids; but ſhe would attend him herſelf, unleſs he promiſed not to run any more hazard of being drowned while he was under her protection." "You are ſo kind to me, my dear Mrs. Waldron," ſaid he, "that I ſhould be unpardonably guilty, if I ſhould willingly give you any uneaſineſs: therefore, whatever commands you lay upon me I ſhall obey."—"It is dutifully ſpoken," ſaid ſhe (and ſhe looked at Miſs Walker): "if every young man were as tractable, we ſhould no longer lament the want of grey heads upon green ſhoulders."—"I hope the grey heads will long continue on the ſhoulders which they moſt adorn," replied Ned; "but ſubmiſſion to authority, and acquieſcence with well-intended advice, become all heads, whether green or grey; and therefore I

ſhall pay it." In the midſt of this converſation William entered the room with ſome letters, one of which Mrs. Waldron announced to be from Lady Cecilia. A deeper crimſon glowed on Edward's cheek, on hearing this news; and he could not ſuppreſs his impatience while the old lady ſought her ſpectacles, firſt in one pocket and then in the other, and after all found them in neither. "Oh! here they are," ſaid he, as he ſpied one end of them peeping out of her prayer-book, where ſhe had been reading the pſalms appointed for the day. The good lady having adjuſted them to her noſe, went to the window with her letter; and Edward's eye attentively watched every feature of her face. "It is all over," ſaid Mrs. Waldron. "Dear Madam, what is all over?" ſaid Edward: "is Lady Cecilia dead?" "No," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, "or ſhe could hardly have written an account of it herſelf. In good truth, my young friend, I ſuſpect you were born among

among us, or you could not ſo quickly have acquired the art of bull-making." Edward bluſhed. "Lord Rivers," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, "is no more; and his poor father is in the deepeſt affliction. Lady Cecilia alſo is a ſincere mourner: yet her tears are not ſo wholly engroſſed but ſhe has ſome left for you, Mr. Evans: but theſe I hope we ſhall ſoon wipe away. Come, I ſee," ſaid ſhe, "your impatience. There, read the letter yourſelf. Her ladyſhip never had a thought that might not be proclaimed to all the world." Ned bowed his gratitude, and took the letter, which trembled in his hand as he read the following lines:

"Ravenſdale, October 14, 1783.

"MY DEAR MRS. WALDRON!

"WE have at length received the melancholy account of my dear brother's death. He departed this life on the ſecond of this month at the Hot Wells of Briſtol,

worn to a ſhadow, but ſenſible to the laſt. Though this iſſue of his complaint has been long foreſeen, yet I cannot expreſs to you the effect which the confirmation of the event has had upon my father. He has never been out of bed ſince he heard of it; and I wiſh to God he ever may! My poor brother George's death gave him a dreadful ſhock; but this ſeems to have overthrown him altogether, and to have entirely undermined the pillars of his conſtitution. We expect the body in the courſe of this week to be committed to the great ſtorehouſe of its anceſtors; and until this laſt and melancholy duty is over, I cannot hope for any ſoftening of my dear father's anguiſh. Ever ſince George's death he has ſpoken of Mr. Evans with increaſed affection; but, alas! here too is another ſource of ſorrow, and our tears are doomed to flow for every one to whom we are attached. No accounts as yet have reached us of this amiable and unfortunate

young

young man, whoſe lot makes me tremble whenever I think of it, and yet is for ever in my thoughts.

"Oh! my dear Mrs. Waldron! how much do I regret your abſence at this time! It is cruel perhaps to invite you to the houſe of mourning; yet, if you can ſtand the ſcene, there is no preſence could ſo cheer the heart of your faithful and affectionate CECILIA RIVERS."

The uſual luſtre of Edward's eyes was ſoftened with a dewy moiſture as he returned the letter to Mrs. Waldron. "What anſwer, madam," ſaid he, "do you mean to give to this requeſt of Lady Cecilia?" "Nay," ſaid ſhe, "I have not thought yet. What would you have me do?" "It is better," ſaid he, "to go to the houſe of mourning than the houſe of feaſting. I will ſet out with you this hour." "What!" replied ſhe, "in that jacket and trowſers?" "Yes," ſaid Edward,

ward, " and without a ſhoe. I would go the whole way upon my knees if it would give her the leaſt conſolation." " Well," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, " then we will go together, but not to-day. You know you have promiſed to obey me; and therefore I lay my injunction upon you not to think of quitting theſe premiſes till I give you leave." " But when will you give me leave?" ſaid Edward. " When I am ready to go with you," replied Mrs. Waldron. " I ſubmit then," ſaid he; " and can aſſure you that in ſo doing I give you a much ſtronger proof of my obedience than in refraining from the rocks: but the pleaſure of pleaſing you ſhall be my reward; and there is only one greater I could receive on earth." " I know well what that is," ſaid Mrs. Waldron; " and I will venture to promiſe that you ſhall receive it; and no words of mine ſhall be wanting to expreſs how worthy I think you of it." " Now," ſaid Mr. Evans, " you do over-

power

power me indeed. And great as was the firſt obligation I received from you, this which you now confer is ſtill greater."

The heart of Mrs. Waldron now ſought to vent itſelf in private of all thoſe complicated feelings with which it was ready to overflow. Her impreſſion of the near relationſhip in which ſhe imagined ſhe ſtood to Edward gained ſtrength in her mind every hour; and her affection for him grew ſo intenſe, that, if ſhe had diſcovered her real grandſon in any other perſon, ſhe would have been diſappointed. She anticipated the contending paſſions of joy and ſorrow which ſhe knew would ariſe in the boſom of Lady Cecilia when ſhe reſtored to her her beloved Edward; and pleaſed herſelf with the thoughts how doubly welcome that preſent would make her viſit. Her firſt preparation for this intended journey was to procure a proper equipment for Edward, who indeed at preſent ſtood in need of every neceſſary; and therefore ſhe

ordered

ordered William to procure from the next market-town the beſt materials and artificers that it could furniſh. Ned was ſomewhat ſurpriſed, when he came in from his walk, to find a levee of taylors, breeches-makers, ſhoemakers, &c. awaiting him. And poor David Morgan being now able to crawl about a little, and being equally deſtitute, he ordered him to be ſent for, and they were both taken meaſure of for every article of dreſs. Ned ordered for himſelf a full ſuit of mourning, as alſo a regimental frock, with a complete equipment for the ſaddle, and (excepting the mourning) the ſame for David. A thouſand thoughts aroſe in his imagination, and filled his breaſt alternately with hopes and fears—with doubts and with anxiety. If his expectations of Lady Cecilia were preſumptuous before, they were now more ſo by an hundred fold; for, by her brother's death, ſhe was become the firſt heireſs in the kingdom, and, doubtleſs, would be ſought for accordingly.

cordingly. On the contrary, he had a recent proof that he was ſtill dear to her recollection, and that neither abſence, nor the probability of his being never heard of again, had been able to baniſh him from her heart. Mrs. Waldron's laſt obſervation had been a cordial to his ſoul, and Time ſeemed to have loſt his ſpeed till the neceſſary arrangements for their journey were completed. In the mean time, however, he wrote a long letter to his father, giving him a full account of his adventures, and particularly of his preſent ſituation; and promiſing that, after he had paid his duty to Lord Ravenſdale and his lovely daughter, from whoſe houſe he was not above ſeventy miles diſtant, he would go to Dublin, and from thence to Holyhead, where he anticipated the joy with which he would be received by his dear parents in that peaceful and ſequeſtered reſidence, which, if poſſible, was ſtill more endeared to him by the dangers and the

difficulties

difficulties he had ſurmounted during the three years he had been abſent from it.

I will leave it to my readers to imagine with what joy the good parſon and his amiable wife received this letter juſt as they were ſitting down to their old and comfortable meal of a Welch rabbit and a tankard of ale before they went to bed. To bed indeed they went in due time, as uſual; but ſleep they had none; and the whole night they paſſed in alternate prayers and thankſgiving, talking about their dear boy, and calculating the hours and minutes till they might hope to ſee him. And now Edward received a letter from the agent of the regiment in Dublin, congratulating him on his return to Ireland, and acquainting him that the regiment was reduced, and he, of conſequence, was on half-pay. He incloſed him a remittance of 50l. which he had ordered, and acquainted him that he had ſtill upwards of 300l. in his hands, for which he would

be

be ready to account whenever he choſe to ſettle.

Theſe comfortable tidings gave an air of freſh animation to Edward's countenance, ſufficiently intereſting and animated before; and the different tradeſmen having brought home their orders, for which he paid them on the ſpot, he appeared once more habited as the Officer and the Gentleman, and (like Lothario, though of a very different character) armed for love or war, and able to conquer in either field.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVIII.

IN a few days Mrs. Waldron had made all her arrangements, and on Monday the 20th of October they ſet off together in a poſt-chaiſe from Glendemus. They went about five miles out of their road, to ſet down Miſs Walker at her own houſe, and then proceeded for Limerick, which was about fifty miles of the journey, and where they intended to ſleep the firſt night. David Morgan, who was now perfectly recovered, attended on horſeback; and every ſtep they advanced dilated Edward's heart, from the conſciouſneſs of its drawing him nearer and nearer to the dear poſſeſſor of it. No unpleaſing circumſtance happened during the day; they arrived in ſafety at their inn, and the agreeable humour of Mrs. Waldron was never at a loſs for converſation.

She

She drew indeed from Edward the relation of his whole life, and dwelt particularly on the earlieſt parts of it; but from his relation could diſcover nothing to ſtrengthen the ſuſpicion ſhe had imbibed. He deſcribed his mother as ſtill living, and likely long to do ſo—as well as his father, who had neither of them been ever out of Wales, except when his father had been at college; and that he was ſtill an unbeneficed clergyman:—but thanks to the generoſity of that truly noble earl whom they were now going to ſee, he had been able to add ſome comforts to the age of his parents, and was himſelf, by the aid of the ſame benevolence, in a way to attain a ſtation which was as much beyond his merits as his expectations. "If I may judge of your merits by what I have heard and ſeen," replied Mrs. Waldron, "I know of no ſtation beyond them, and hardly any to which I do not ſuſpect them to be entitled: but God will in his own due time bring all things to light: for

for " there is nothing hid that ſhall not be " revealed, nor covered that ſhall not be " known." Edward was an entire ſtranger to the cauſe of this remark, and at ſome loſs to account for it, but did not think proper to preſs for an explanation. He replied only in general, that " the ways of Providence had been in reſpect to him wonderful; and that he ſhould ever pay a cheerful and ready ſubmiſſion to them, whether favourable or ſevere."

It was one of thoſe charming days which in this climate we often experience in October, when mellow Nature robes herſelf in her richeſt attire, ſet off by a golden luſtre peculiar to the ſeaſon, which the declining ſun ſheds on every object; when, on the ſecond day of their journey, about three in the afternoon, the rich parks of Ravenſdale, with their ſurrounding foreſts, and the ſilver windings of the Shannon appeared in view: from amidſt the boſom of aged oaks, roſe the ſummits of the noble man-

ſion itſelf, whilſt the calmneſs of the day, the deep ſilence of the woods, diſturbed only by the ruſtling of ſome falling leaves, diffuſed a ſober melancholy over the majeſtic proſpect, perfectly in uniſon with the immediate occaſion of their viſit. Ned ordered the poſtillion to ſtop; they were now indeed on the very ſpot where he remembered to have ſtopped three years before to take his laſt look of Ravenſdale, when he left it in company with his dear friend Captain Rivers to embark for America, and where he offered up a mental prayer to be brought back to it again. On the ſame ſpot he now offered up a mental thankſgiving, yet chaſtened with the tender recollection of his departed friend, and of the recent melancholy breach which the family had experienced. A few ſoft ſorrows he on this occaſion borrowed from Love to pay to Friendſhip, and Love was not diſpleaſed; for Friendſhip is his next of kin, and deareſt of his relations. A peaſant

now

now happening to appear in view, they enquired of him about the family at Ravenſdale. He informed them that the old lord took on greatly, on account of the young lord's death, whoſe body was arrived the evening before; but that Lady Cecilia was well. The name of Cecilia vibrated through the heart of Edward, and diſpelled all glooms, as the dawn of morning chaſes before it the ſhadows of night; and the poſtillion driving on, ſoon brought them to the door. A ſervant in deep mourning opened it; and Lady Cecilia, who heard the carriage coming up the avenue, and ſuppoſed it to be Mrs. Waldron, had come down to receive her. She had juſt entered the ſaloon as Mrs. Wáldron, leaning on Edward's arm, met her. Her ladyſhip, amazed and delighted, ſaid, "Mr. Evans! is it poſſible?" and, overpowered with ſurpriſe, and the ſudden turn of her thoughts, would have fainted and fallen, had not Edward caught her in his arms. He himſelf

was agitated to a degree, that prevented all utterance of ſpeech; he preſſed however Cecilia's hand to his boſom, where ſhe diſtinctly felt the pantings of his heart, with which her own kept time in faithful uniſon; both ready to burſt their habitations, to unite together. Mrs. Waldron ſaw theſe mutual emotions with delight; and indeed they were too apparent to eſcape the obſervation of the ſervants; who, however, on their parts were not much leſs delighted to ſee Ned return again in ſafety; for it was impoſſible for him to be known for any time, even by the humbleſt menial, without being endeared to him. A few minutes however reſtored both parties to ſome degree of compoſure, at leaſt ſufficient to enable them to walk into a drawing-room, and ſit down. A flood of tears here came to the relief of Lady Cecilia, in which it was doubtful whether thoſe of joy or ſorrow were moſt abundant. At length her ladyſhip regained that ſweet

and ſerene complacency, which was the habitual temperament of her ſoul. "Oh! Mr. Evans!" ſaid ſhe, "you muſt excuſe the perturbation in which the joy of this unexpected meeting has thrown my ſpirits: they have ſo long been unuſed to any pleaſurable feelings, that I was not able to bear up againſt the ſudden tide which ruſhed through its deſerted channels. I have a thouſand queſtions to aſk you, but firſt, I muſt go to my dear father, and announce your arrival: if any event can give him pleaſure in his preſent affliction, I know this will."—"My dear Lady Cecilia!" replied Ned, "ever ſince I had firſt the happineſs to be known to you, the honour of your friendſhip has been the ſovereign cordial of my ſoul, and the pleaſure which I feel after having eſcaped ſo many perils, to find myſelf again in your preſence, would perhaps be too intenſe, if it had not been damped by the affecting ſituation in which your family at preſent is placed; and with

whoſe unfeigned ſorrows I beg leave to mix my own." A look of the ſweeteſt benignity, illumined perhaps a little by a ray of a more exalted paſſion, beamed on Edward as ſhe paſſed him to go to her father: it kindled all the fires of his heart, which, fanned by hope, burned brilliant, but did not conſume.

"I told you, Edward," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, when Lady Cecilia was gone, "that you ſhould get the reward you ſought." "Oh!" ſaid he, putting both her hands between his, "I am too happy. To your friendſhip I can confide my ſoul. I ſee her ladyſhip has not forgot me. I ſee I am ſtill dear to her, and the rapture of knowing it is almoſt too much for me to bear."—"Edward," ſaid ſhe, "you deſerve it all. She is a charming creature, to be ſure, yet I tell you you are not her inferior. You are worthy of her. Your hearts were formed for each other: they were created to be united, and the will

of Heaven ſhall be done." Poor Edward, who had no conception of Mrs. Waldron's ſecret meaning, thought this ſpeech only a rhapſody, which her friendſhip for him had inſpired. It came, however, from the bottom of her heart, and the full conviction of her mind, however inſcrutable the fact appeared. Lady Cecilia now re-entered the room. "My father," ſaid ſhe, "Mr. Evans, has deſired me to offer you his moſt affectionate congratulations on your ſafe return to this houſe. No event that has happened to him for a long time has given him equal pleaſure. He has not been out of bed, only to have it made, for upwards of this fortnight paſt; but his impatience to ſee you is ſo great, that he has ordered a fire in the library, and is determined to riſe in the evening, to have the pleaſure of converſing with you. He deſires me to preſent his compliments to you alſo, Mrs. Waldron, and to thank you for this kind inſtance of your attention in

coming here at this time." "We are both under the higheſt obligations to his Lordſhip," ſaid Mrs. Waldron; "and ſhall be moſt happy if our company can conduce to his amuſement." In this ſentiment Edward ſincerely joined; and now Lady Cecilia, impatient to hear ſomething of Edward's adventures, deſired him to relate them. Contrary to the manner of moſt hiſtorians, he began with the concluſion of his tale, and related the manner of his ſhipwreck, and the interpoſing hand of Providence, which threw him under the protection of Mrs. Waldron. He acknowledged his having received her ladyſhip's letter at Charleſtown, which was a rich cordial to his ſpirits after the deſperate fatigues of his Indian expedition. He dwelt with a tender, yet a maſterly hand on the pathetic circumſtances of the death of her gallant brother; and here their tears flowed again in uniſon. Indeed the whole of his narrative commanded the deepeſt attention

from both his hearers, till at laſt a ſervant announced dinner to be on the table. A temperate meal, which had the more merit as it was made in the midſt of the moſt refined delicacies, ſufficed theſe virtuous friends, which they made Edward waſh down with a glaſs of exquiſite wine, the richeſt vintage of France. But no pleaſures of the table were at any time much prized by him, ſave only as they contributed to bring friends together, and to promote the genial intercourſe of ſouls. The ſatisfaction of his heart at this moment aroſe from feelings which had no groſſneſs in them, and to which the higheſt delicacies of food could give no addition. In the evening, after tea, Lord Ravenſdale's gentleman acquainted Mr. Evans, that his Lordſhip wiſhed to ſee him in the library. There is perhaps no object more intereſting to a contemplative mind than a great and good man in deep affliction: and of all the characters which the pen of any writer

writer has ever drawn, the moſt inſtructive, and the moſt affecting, in my opinion, is that of Job. I will not compare Lord Ravenſdale to this renowned ſufferer; for certainly neither his patience, nor his virtue, would bear to be placed in any degree of competition; but his misfortunes touched the heart of Edward, and added to that veneration which he had for his high rank, his exalted character, and his juſt ſenſe of the great obligations he ſuppoſed himſelf to be under to him. When he entered the room, his lordſhip attempted to riſe; but Ned, ſeeing him too feeble, ſprung forward, and, dropping upon one knee at his feet, took his hand, and kiſſed it. His lordſhip, overpowered with his effort to riſe, and with the multitude of tender recollections which filled his ſoul, ſunk back in his arm chair, and was ſome minutes before he could ſpeak. At length he recovered his voice:—"In the multitude of the ſorrows which weigh down my ſoul,

I know no circumſtance, Mr. Evans, that could at this time have given me equal ſatisfaction as that which I now enjoy in ſeeing you here. The friend of my dear ſon, in whoſe arms my gallant George breathed his laſt, excluſive of all former obligations, muſt ever be dear to me." A tremulous heſitation in his ſpeech here ſtopped his lordſhip from proceeding; and Edward, at that inſtant looking up, happened to caſt his eye on a picture of Captain Rivers, exquiſitely painted, which ſeemed to look from the canvas with an approving ſmile as it beheld Edward relating to his father the circumſtances of his death. The effect was irreſiſtibly affecting; and a heart much more callous than that of Edward could not fail to have been moved by it. For the ſpace of near two hours he entertained Lord Ravenſdale with the recital of the moſt remarkable events which had befallen him; till his lordſhip at laſt, overpowered with the fatigue of ſitting up, and ſtill more

with the agitation of his ſoul, gave him leave to retire, with aſſurances of an unalterable attachment of regard, friendſhip, and eſteem.

As he left Lord Ravenſdale's apartment, he met Lady Cecilia in the lobby, who aſked him if he would take a laſt look of her brother where he lay in ſtate. Edward complied. Her ladyſhip led him to the room which had formerly been his lordſhip's drawing-room, and which was now hung round with black. Having ordered the undertaker, who conſtantly watched the body, to withdraw, ſhe turned the key in the lock, and Edward and ſhe were left alone. On a raiſed platform, in the centre of the room, lay the body in its coffin, under a canopy of black velvet. It had been embalmed at Briſtol, and was to appearance as freſh as in the hour in which it had been ſeparated from the ſoul. Twelve wax candles of a very large ſize were burning round it. At the head lay the

eſcutcheon of the family with the coronet; at the feet, a large marble urn, containing the heart and bowels of the deceaſed, embalmed, and which were to be depoſited in the vault with the body. The countenance ſeemed placid and aſleep. "Here," ſaid Lady Cecilia, "is what once was Lord Rivers." Edward wept. "I too could weep, my Edward!" ſaid Lady Cecilia, "but I viſit this awful object every day." "Oh! my Cecilia!" ſaid Edward; "when I behold this body, and reflect that all that ſtate and wealth it has loſt you have gained, my heart trembles at its preſumption when it aſks you can you ſtill think of your humble but faithful Edward?" "My Edward! when I behold this body, my ſoul ſickens at worldly pomp. Behold here the ſad concluſion of all human greatneſs! The mind which has this object feelingly impreſſed upon it, deſpiſes wealth; and having food and raiment, may well learn to be therewith "content."

" content." " Sweet moraliſt !" ſaid he, as he held her hand, while love ſat trembling in his eyes; " and canſt thou be content with Edward?"—" Oh ! my Edward !" ſaid ſhe, " thou knoweſt I can be content with thee. Thou knoweſt my fond heart is all thy own. Give me thy love; and were I miſtreſs of the Indies, they ſhould be thine." " Here, then, in this awful preſence, my Cecilia !" ſaid Edward, " I devote my heart, my undivided heart, to thee. But why ſhould I devote what is not mine to beſtow ! From the firſt hour I ſaw thee thou poſſeſſedſt it; and never, never, ſhall another ſhare it." A holy kiſs, in which their mutual ſouls hung on each other's lips, ſealed this ſacred promiſe; in which they both vowed to each other, that, until the great change ſhould happen, by which both ſhould become like the awful ſpectacle before them, their hearts ſhould know no other love. For ſome time they enjoyed the ſweet raptures of this

mutual declaration; and their eyes, melting as they viewed each other, beamed unutterable love. At length Lady Cecilia firſt broke ſilence: "My Edward! (for from this hour I ſhall ever think you mine;) my Edward! let the ſolemn promiſe I have made you put your heart at reſt, and remain contented with it for the preſent. Your Cecilia, while ſhe lives, is yours; but the melancholy ſituation of my father prevents me at this time from avowing this ſentiment. Alas! Edward, I behold him faſt declining, and I would not do a thing that could add one arrow to the many which ſtick in his ſoul, no, not to purchaſe Heaven. Be patient, then, my Edward! and ſeek not your Cecilia's hand till ſhe can give it to you without a ſigh, without a ſingle reflection that can diminiſh the rapture with which ſhe would beſtow it." "Oh! Cecilia!" replied Evans, "you are too good, too virtuous, too wiſe, for me ever to diſpute your will. My tongue has

has no utterance that can expreſs the ſentiments with which my heart glows toward you. Let me then fold you to that heart, and ſwear by the faithful attachment it has for you, that I live but to love, to oblige, and to obey you." With theſe words he again preſſed her to his boſom, and their balmy lips breathed into each other the ſoul of love. They now returned to Mrs. Waldron, who was all this time meditating alone in the parlour; and Lady Cecilia again entruſted to the undertaker the melancholy charge of her brother's remains.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIX.

THE next day was appointed for paying the laſt ſad duty to the deceaſed Lord Rivers; and as the rector of the pariſh of Ravenſdale was very old and infirm, and entirely unable to officiate, Doctor Burton, as the intimate friend of the family, took the duty upon himſelf. We have before mentioned the good opinion he had conceived of Edward, and how much he was intereſted in his favour. It was with extreme pleaſure, therefore, as well as ſurpriſe, that he learned, on his arrival at Ravenſdale, that he was there before him. A very cordial interview took place between them, in which the Doctor preſſed Edward to let him ſee him at Burton Hall —a viſit which, indeed, Edward was very willing to make, but deferred at this time

time on account of the diſtreſſed ſtate of the family he was with. Lord Ravenſdale, who was unable to appear himſelf, had requeſted Edward to fulfil the duty of chief mourner, and to do the honours of the houſe—a taſk which he acquitted himſelf of to the perfect ſatisfaction of a very numerous aſſemblage of the principal gentlemen of the country, many of whom had never ſeen him before, but all of whom had heard the beginning of his hiſtory, and wiſhed to improve their acquaintance with him, from the ſpecimen of politeneſs and attention which he this day exhibited before them. After the funeral ceremony was over, they all returned to Ravenſdale-houſe, and partook of a ſplendid entertainment ſuitable to the dignity of the living lord, and to his affection for the deceaſed; and in the evening the company departed, impreſſed with very favourable ſentiments of the good ſenſe, modeſty, and politeneſs of Edward. It was remarked, that neither

of

of the Mr. Nettlefields was there, though invited. An excuſe came from Captain Nettlefield, that his father was ill; but as no word in it was addreſſed to Edward, the real cauſe of their abſence was imputed to a lurking envy and ungenerous hatred, which both their breaſts were ſuſpected of harbouring againſt that gallant young man. His heart, however, was clear of all reſentment, and could not long retain ill-will againſt any creature in the univerſe; according to the true obſervation of the poet,

> Forgiveneſs to the injur'd doth belong:
> They never pardon who have done the wrong.

When the ſad duties of this day were over, and the tomb cloſed on the laſt of Lord Ravenſdale's ſons, the ſurviving branches of the family felt a heavy weight removed from them, excepting the venerable peer himſelf. The ruin of his houſe, as he called it, wrung him to the ſoul; and

and being always of a religious turn of mind, he ſometimes expreſſed himſelf as if he was deſerted of God. The piety of his mind, directed perhaps by the native generoſity of his temper, induced him to ſeek the favour of his Creator by the exerciſe of that godlike virtue which in Scripture is ſaid to cover a multitude of ſins; and therefore a few days after the interment of Lord Rivers, he gave to Doctor Burton one thouſand guineas, to be by him diſtributed among ſuch indigent families in the neighbourhood as he knew to be moſt in need of it. If the bleſſings of the poor could indeed at any time cure the diſtempers either of the body or the ſoul, it is certain Lord Ravenſdale would never have felt any of them. But, alas! his diſorder lay too deep; and his deſpondency at times began to be truly alarming. There was no ſociety which at theſe times ſeemed ſo acceptable to him as Edward's. He felt a complacency in his preſence, which

he

he could not account for: he often kept him for hours together in his room, talking to him of his dear ſon George, hearing over and over again all the little anecdotes Edward could recollect about him; and not ſeldom reading his letters, in which frequent mention was made of Ned, in terms of the moſt ardent friendſhip. Theſe melancholy interviews, though not quite ſuited either to Edward's years or diſpoſition, yet he gladly indulged him in, happy in ſeeing his lordſhip ſomewhat relieved by them, and knowing it was the moſt acceptable ſervice he could perform to Lady Cecilia. But as he had another duty to fulfil, which alſo lay near his heart, he did at laſt, with her ladyſhip's conſent, hint to Lord Ravenſdale the neceſſity he was under of going to ſee his father and mother, who knew that he had now been above a month in Europe, and who were extremely impatient to ſee him. A viſible uneaſineſs appeared on Lord Ravenſdale's

Ravenſdale's countenance, when Edward mentioned going away; yet he admitted the neceſſity of it. At the ſame time he preſſed him to return and ſpend the Chriſtmas; "for I know not how it is, my young friend, but I feel a comfort when you are with me that I do not experience on any other occaſion." "My Lord," replied Edward, "there is no circumſtance can give me equal joy to contributing to your comfort and conſolation. And if your lordſhip will permit me to go for a few weeks to Wales, to pay my duty to my parents, I ſhall return (if God ſpares me) before Chriſtmas, and paſs the winter with you." This ready compliance cheered his countenance again; and the next day but one being fixed on for his departure, he went to acquaint Lady Cecilia with what had paſſed.

The candid confeſſions and mutual vows which had lately been made by each to the other, had removed from their young and amiable

amiable hearts, all the pains and anxieties of love, whilſt the ſweet hopes of that gentle paſſion bloſſomed there as in their native ſoil. Lady Cecilia, therefore, approved of Edward's going to his father's, but enjoined him to remember his promiſe, and be ſpeedy in his return. She told him alſo ſhe expected to hear often from him, and promiſed that ſhe would herſelf let him know all the material occurrences at Ravenſdale, till ſhe ſhould have the happineſs to ſee him there again. Her ladyſhip and Mrs. Waldron being engaged this morning about ſome buſineſs between themſelves, Ned took that opportunity of traverſing ſome of his old walks, and particularly he wiſhed to viſit Doran's mother, who as yet he ſuppoſed had not heard of his arrival. He bent his ſteps therefore towards his door; and entering it ſomewhat abruptly, he found the old woman and her daughter by the fire-ſide, but thought there was ſome confuſion in the

the young one's countenance, and that juſt as he entered, he ſaw ſomething red huddled behind the partition. His ſuſpicion led him to young Nettlefield, for the girl was uncommonly beautiful; but as her mother was ſitting by, perfectly compoſed, he could not think any thing improper had been paſſing. He felt however a deſire to be ſatisfied, becauſe he had marked this old woman for an object of his bounty, and did not chooſe it ſhould be miſplaced. She aroſe as ſoon as he entered, and expreſſed her joy at ſeeing him again; but ſhe did not mention one word about her ſon.

Edward turning his converſation to the daughter, paid her ſome compliments on her good looks, and aſked her if ſhe had not got a ſweetheart yet? She bluſhed, and denied it. "It is impoſſible," ſaid Edward, "if you are as good as you are fair, that ſo much comelineſs ſhould be overlooked." "What ſay you, dame?" ſaid he to the mother.—

"Indeed,

"Indeed, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "I hope ſhe is good, and have no reaſon to think to the contrary; but as for a ſweetheart, I never ſaw one enter the houſe." "Take care, dame, what you ſay: I ſtrongly ſuſpect there is one in the houſe at this inſtant." A ruſtling was at this time heard behind the partition, and there came forward, not Captain Nettlefield, as Ned ſuſpected, but David Morgan, to Ned's infinite ſurpriſe, and indeed ſomewhat more to his ſatisfaction. "O ho!" ſays Edward, "is it you, David?"—"Yes, pleaſe your honour!" replied he, "it is I, indeed, but not in the character you ſuppoſed. It is but the ſecond time I have ever been in the houſe, and I came only to talk with the young woman and her mother about my old comrade her ſon, that, as your honour knows, is a brother warrior of your own, among the Indians."

"Well, David, this is a very good come-off, but why did you hide yourſelf?"—

David

David looked a little awkward. "I do not know, pleaſe your honour. I was afraid, ſeeing me here, your honour might ſuſpect ſomething and be angry; but I declare both the girl and I are as innocent as the child unborn."—"I do not queſtion the girl," ſaid Edward, "but innocence need never hide itſelf; neither do I ſee any harm in a young man liking a handſome woman, provided his thoughts are honourable."—"God bleſs your honour!" ſaid David, "you know ſoldiers are always honourable."—"I know they ought to be ſo," ſaid Edward; "and that I will have no connections with any that are not ſo."—"You ſhall never have reaſon to complain of me for that," replied David; "and, if Molly here has no objection, I declare before your honour, I will lay ſiege to her heart according to all the rules of honourable love."—Poor Molly bluſhed, and hung down her head. The old woman ſmiled, and Ned ſaw that the fortreſs would

would not be able to ſtand a long ſiege. "Your declaration is fair, David," ſaid he; "I ſhall be one of the neutral powers, but ſhall wiſh equally well to both."

The myſtery of the red coat was thus cleared up to his ſatisfaction. He comforted the old woman with the hopes that ſhe might again ſee her ſon, as he had himſelf left him but a few months before in good health; and with ſome good advice to Molly not to ſurrender but on honourable terms, took his leave.

After a little time David followed him, and got up with him juſt as he entered the grounds of Ravenſdale. Ned there renewed his injunctions to him, that if he valued his favour, not to deceive the girl. David aſſured him nothing was farther from his thoughts; that he thought her a charming girl, and that ſhe had an honeſt character, and that he thought if ſhe would take him, ſhe would make him happy. "There is no fear of her not taking you," ſaid

ſaid Edward, "only be you faithful and kind to her when you get her. For a little time, however, your courtſhip will be interrupted; for I ſhall leave this for Dublin the day after to-morrow, and from thence ſhall go to Wales: but I intend, if it pleaſe God, to return before Chriſtmas, and to ſpend the winter here."

David felt a little diſconcerted that he was ſo ſoon to part with Molly; but the hopes of ſhortly ſeeing her again, and the pleaſure of beholding his father and mother, and relating to his admiring friends his hair-breadth ſcapes, and hazards in the imminently deadly breach, revived his ſpirits, and ſet him on preparing for the journey with alacrity.

CHAP. LX.

SOME part of every day Mr. Evans ſpent with Lord Ravenſdale, whether his lordſhip was able to riſe or not. On that preceding his intended journey, his lordſhip ſent for him up to his bed-chamber; he was exceedingly low, and much agitated by ſome inward oppreſſion of his mind, which Edward imputed to the ſhock his nerves ſuſtained from the late deaths in his family. When he ſpoke of his deceaſed children, he wept much, yet took pleaſure in dwelling on the ſubject. Edward, who was no bad preacher, drew ſome arguments of conſolation from religion; but here he found he touched upon a ſtring which added to the ſufferings of the unhappy peer, and, inſtead of conſolation, ſeemed to drive him to deſpair.

This

This was a melancholy diſcovery, ſince of all mortal miſeries religious deſpondency is the greateſt. He had the power, however, for the preſent, to ſooth his anguiſh, and to divert his mind from its gloomy contemplations. When he announced his departure for the next morning, his lordſhip ſaid he ſent for him on that account, to remind him of his promiſe to return before Chriſtmas, and to ſpend the winter. "God knows," ſaid he, "whether I ſhall live to ſee you again. In that caſe, however, Mr. Evans, you will find I have not forgot you." Edward was embarraſſed, but was going to make ſome reply, when Lord Ravenſdale interrupted him:

"My dear friend!" ſaid he, "I conſider you as an adopted child. When my poor George died, he left you to me as a legacy. In this pocket-book," ſaid he, drawing one from under his pillow, "is a ſmall ſum that was due to him, and which I was intending

to ſend to him, when I received the melancholy news of his death. I deſire you will receive it as his laſt acknowledgment for your tenderneſs and friendſhip in the hour of his extremity."

Edward was overpowered, and received the pocket-book with ſtreaming eyes, and greater agitation than his lordſhip gave it.

"As for your journey," continued he, "when you reach Dublin, you will uſe my houſe as your own; and to carry you thither, there are a couple of moſt excellent hunters in the ſtable, which belonged to my poor ſon Rivers—I can have no uſe for them; and though that does not enhance the merit of a gift, yet it may be an inducement to you to accept of them."

To a generous mind there is no pleaſure ſo great as that of conferring favours; and Lord Ravenſdale's was ſo truly of this temper, that the ſatisfaction ariſing from it had a conſiderable effect upon his ſpirits, and for a while ſuſpended that deſpondency which

which had ſo lately and ſo grievouſly attacked him. Edward would have expreſſed his gratitude, but his lordſhip would not ſuffer it. "Return ſoon to me," ſaid he, "and I ſhall eſteem that the greateſt favour you can do me."

Edward bowed reſpectfully, and we may be ſure renewed his promiſe, with full intention to keep it; and withdrew from his lordſhip to confer with Lady Cecilia. Her ladyſhip was ſitting in her own dreſſing-room; he tapped at her door, and her ſweet voice deſiring him to come in, he related to her all that had paſſed. The ſmall red leather pocket-book he opened in her preſence, and found it contained five bank notes of one hundred pounds each.

When he mentioned the hint his lordſhip gave him of having provided for him in his will, "I am afraid," ſays he, "that will be robbing you, Cecilia."—"Never mind that, Edward," ſaid ſhe; "I ſhall contrive to make you give it me all back again."

"Dear Cecilia, what is there I would not give you?—Oh that I was an earl, and you a curate's daughter, that I might lay my coronet at your feet, and ſhew you how diſintereſtedly I love you!" "I will give you all credit for the diſintereſtedneſs of your love, Edward," replied ſhe; "and really believe that if that was the caſe you would act as you ſay." "Yes! by Heavens would I!" ſaid Edward, "if I was heir to the crown: but, alas! I am heir to nothing, and all the obligation is on your ſide: yet I have this conſolation, that

True gratitude, by owing, owes not;
But ſtands at once indebted and diſcharged."

"True," ſaid Lady Cecilia, "and on that principle I will in due time give you a receipt in full.—But, O Edward! you ſhock me with the account of my poor father: what is it that can affect his mind in the manner you mention?" "Nay, that," ſaid he, "I cannot tell: whatever affects the nerves generally affects the mind; and where

the

the heart has been habituated to religious ſentiments, thoſe impreſſions ſometimes take a gloomy turn. But I truſt that time, the great ſoftener of ſorrow, will apply his lenient balſam to your father's wounds; and as his nerves recover their tone, his deſpondencies will vaniſh of courſe." "I truſt they will. But, O Edward! I have ſeen ſuch dreadful effects of ſimilar imaginations, that I tremble only to think of what may be the iſſue." "My dear Cecilia!" replied Edward, "if you torment yourſelf with *may be's*, you will never have a happy hour while you live. I have no doubt but that I ſhall ſee your venerable father ſenſible of the bleſſings of Providence, and of the large portion of them which he may yet enjoy. It is a peculiar pleaſure to me, that he ſeems to like to have me near him. I want not that inducement, my Cecilia! to haſten my return to this happy ſeat; yet, it ſhall haſten me; and in the mean time I think it would be adviſable for you to aſk Doctor

Burton to ſpend ſome time here; for his great erudition, his amiable manners, and his truly apoſtolic zeal in the duty of his profeſſion, point him out as the happieſt reſource you could apply to in a ſituation like the preſent." "I have thought of it ſome time, my Edward!" ſaid Lady Cecilia, "and you will not be an hour from the houſe, till I ſend to him." "I ſhall count the hours till I return," replied Edward; "and I will venture to predict, that I ſhall find you happier when I come back than when I leave you." "You may do that, indeed," ſaid Lady Cecilia, "and yet be no prophet: but, come! Mrs. Waldron will wonder what is become of us." So down they marched together, and found the good lady in a vein of ſuch high good humour, as ſufficiently indicated ſhe at leaſt thought all was as it ſhould be.

Edward now walked into the ſtable to view his new acquiſition, and to deliver the charge of them to David Morgan. The

ſervants

ſervants indeed had of late been ſo accuſtomed to receive all their orders from him; that they began already to conſider him as their future maſter, and whatever he deſired was implicitly obeyed. The horſes were noble animals, of a dark bay colour, and perfectly matches to each other, well trained for the field, and, as the phraſe is, ſound in wind and limb. No preſent could have been more acceptable to Edward, who delighted in a horſe above all creatures who wore not the human face divine. He ordered them out into a park, that he might ſee their paces; when vaulting ſucceſſively on their backs, naked as they were, with only their halters round their necks, he put them to their ſpeed, and through all their exerciſes convinced them he would ſoon teach them to know their rider. Horſemanſhip indeed was an accompliſhment in which he particularly excelled; and when a boy he uſed to amuſe himſelf with helping David to dreſs old Black-

bird, his father's only ſteed. To David then he now committed the charge of his two courſers, but comforted the old groom, who had hitherto attended them, and was ſorry to quit their care, with a guinea. David loved a horſe little leſs than his maſter, and was as able, though not quite ſo graceful a rider: he received the charge with tranſport, as well as the orders to have them ready for their journey at an early hour the next morning. When the morning came, both Lady Cecilia and Mrs. Waldron had riſen long before their uſual hour, to provide breakfaſt for Edward, and to bid him adieu. Every parting was in ſome degree painful to all their hearts; but this leſs ſo than any they had yet experienced, from the expectation of ſo ſoon meeting again, united to the ſweet ſenſations inſpired by mutual love. They ſaw him to the door; they ſaw him mount into the ſaddle; and, with one ſoft adieu and graceful motion of his hand, they ſaw him

ſhoot from them like an arrow out of a bow. A tear ſtood trembling in Cecilia's eye, not unobſerved by Mrs. Waldron: ſhe ſoon however wiped it away; and though not cheerful through the day, ſhe yet recovered her uſual ſerenity.

Ravenſdale was about 76 miles from Dublin; yet ſuch was the fleetneſs and the excellent mettle of his horſes that he reached Lord Ravenſdale's houſe in Merrion-Square before it was quite dark. The houſe-keeper, who had been appriſed of his coming, had every thing in order for his reception, and offered him ſeveral delicacies for his ſupper. He preferred, however, ſome beef-ſteaks and roaſted potatoes; on which having feaſted moſt heartily, he found himſelf very well inclined for his bed. David was regaled in the kitchen with ſeveral of thoſe dainties which Edward rejected, as alſo with a bottle of claret after them; for Mrs. Mulroony, excluſive of that general good-will which ſhe always had for

a handſome young fellow, had remembered David with affection from the laſt time that he had been there, and kept him up till a very late hour relating to her the diſaſters of the American campaigns, and the heroic ſhare which his maſter and poor captain Rivers (not forgetting himſelf) had in them. The mention of Captain Rivers brought tears into the good woman's eyes, who lamented how there was now no ſon to inherit that fine eſtate. "Oh! but," ſaid David, "there is Lady Cecilia; I will warrant her ladyſhip will have ſons enough if ſhe gets the man ſhe has a mind to." Mrs. Mulroony now pricked up her ears! and Sufan the chamber-maid growing ſleepy, or perhaps thinking my lady houſe-keeper wiſhed her to do ſo, retired to bed, ſo that ſhe had full opportunity to ingratiate herſelf into poor David's confidence, and, with the help of another bumper or two, to get poſſeſſion of all the ſecrets he had, ſome of which ſhe

no doubt found very intereſting. The reſult of this conference was her aſſuming a moſt profound reſpect for Edward, which ſhe thought on ſome future occaſion might be of uſe to her; and as David had rather over-ſlept himſelf in the morning, ſhe had got Suſan to apply to another young man, an acquaintance of hers, to dreſs the horſes, and have all things in order in the ſtables againſt Edward roſe, which ſhe knew he would do at an early hour. Thus all things went ſmoothly on; and an excellent breakfaſt being ready in the parlour againſt he came down, Edward did juſtice to her ſolicitude, and thought himſelf much obliged to Mrs. Mulroony for her care and attention. After breakfaſt he went out with the intention of calling on the agent of his regiment; but paſſing through Stephen's Green in his way, he met Mr. Grainger, who had ſo hoſpitably entertained him when Lord Rivers and he had been overturned in his neighbourhood. His little

grand-

grandſon, a ſweet boy of about ſix years of age, was walking with him; they were both in deep mourning, which made Edward forebode the misfortune which really had happened, the death of that beautiful and amiable woman whom Nettlefield had ſo baſely injured. He immediately, however, went up and ſaluted Mr. Grainger, who at that inſtant did not recollect him; but, being reminded by Edward of the circumſtance of the overturn, and his having paſſed a night with him in the country, was ſincerely rejoiced to ſee him. "Alas! ſaid he, "Mr. Evans, how ſhort is the time ſince I had the pleaſure to entertain you that night, and yet how many changes have happened in that ſhort period! You and I alone remain of all who paſſed that night together." "I feared as much," ſaid Edward, "when I ſaw you and my little friend Charles, whom I have not forgot, though he cannot remember me, in your preſent dreſs." "But how long have you been

been in Ireland, and what ſtay do you make in it?" ſaid Mr. Grainger. Edward then gave him a brief hiſtory of his principal adventures, concluding, that he had only reached Dublin the evening before, and intended to go to Holyhead in the packet which was to ſail that night; but that he expected to be back again in a month or ſix weeks. Mr. Grainger then took his promiſe, that on his return he would ſpend a day or two with him at his little lodge; and after a cordial ſhake of the hands, and a kiſs of little Charles, they ſeparated.

Edward proceeded to the agent, whom he found in his compting-houſe; with him he ſpent above an hour, and received from him the balance of his account in bills upon London, amounting to 336l. ſome odd ſhillings. He was alſo much preſſed to ſtay dinner, but excuſed himſelf on account of his intention to ſail in the evening. He returned therefore to Merrion-Square, and took a quiet meal alone.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mulroony and Mr. David had another very agreeable tête-à-tête; and about nine at night, the horſes being embarked, Edward took leave of Dublin, and ſet ſail with fine weather and a fair wind for Holyhead.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXI.

TO one who has twice croſſed the Atlantic ocean, the paſſage between Dublin and Holyhead ſeems little more than a ferry, and was indeed performed by Ned with almoſt as little trouble as one often paſſes a moderate river; for very ſoon after he got on board he laid himſelf down in his birth, and gave full ſcope to thoſe pleaſing hopes which could not fail to riſe in his mind, whether he contemplated thoſe dear friends whom he was going to ſee, or thoſe whom he had lately left, and to whom he intended ſhortly to return. Theſe tranquillizing ideas ſoon ſoothed him into ſleep: from which he did not awake till David about eight in the morning came to tell him they were juſt going into the harbour. He was not long in jumping

jumping upon deck, and once more hailing the ſublime ſhores over which St. David preſides. He ſtaid no longer at the Head than to refreſh his horſes a little after their voyage, and then ſet forward to Gwindo, intending to breakfaſt with the good landlady there, Mrs. Knowles, whoſe houſe nobody will paſs who has once experienced the neatneſs, cheapneſs, and kindneſs of her entertainment. Poor Mrs. Knowles at the time when he arrived there was not able to move farther than from her bed to her eaſy chair, being confined by a ſevere fit of the rheumatiſm, to which ſhe was extremely ſubject; but when ſhe heard of Edward being there, ſhe invited him into her room, and ordered his breakfaſt beſide herſelf, that ſhe might not loſe a minute of his company while he ſtaid; and indeed ſhe kept him near two hours, hearing his adventures, and entertaining him in her turn with the recent occurrences of the neighbourhood. At laſt he ſet forward again,

again, and a little before two beheld the venerable brow of Penmanmawr, which overhung his father's dwelling. His heart beat with a quicker motion; a few minutes more brought him to the turning of the road, from whence, between two aged oaks, the humble, but neat and rural dwelling firſt preſents its unobtruſive front. This was the very ſpot in which he had taken his laſt lingering look of his dear mother, and in this very ſpot did the kind fates ordain that ſhe ſhould be at this inſtant walking, and leaning on the arm of her good and tender huſband: their backs indeed were turned, for they had been taking a little walk together, and were now returning home to dinner. They heard the trampling of the horſes—they ſtopped; they turned—they ſaw their long-loſt Edward, in all the bloom and vigour of health. The mother ſcreamed with joy. She ſnatched her hand from under her good man's arm, and ran towards her ſon.

Ned

Ned jumped from his horſe.—" 'Tis he! 'tis he! it is my Edward!" ſhe cried, as ſhe ſtrained him to her boſom; whilſt honeſt Evans, with more temperate but not leſs real ſatisfaction, firſt raiſed his eyes in gratitude to Heaven, and then embraced Edward in his turn. Joy ſoon communicated itſelf through the whole neighbourhood. Our honeſt curate now welcomed David home again, whoſe father and mother alſo ſoon made their appearance, and thought as much of their hero, and not without reaſon, as if they had been ever ſo great. David did not think ſo much of himſelf, however, as to forget the horſes. He and his father put them into the ſtable, beſide old Blackbird, who was ſtill living, and did not ſeem to reliſh the intruſion, but who grew better pleaſed when he partook of the plentiful fare with which the two noble ſtrangers were entertained.

Edward, with his mother leaning on his arm, now reached the houſe, into which

the good curate followed; and now another kiſſing and welcoming took place till Towſer, Ned's favourite dog, appeared. Twenty times did he courſe round him in circles, and jump upon his breaſt and back, licking his face and hands, and ſhewing no leſs faithful attachment than him whom Homer has immortalized in his Odyſſey, and who knew again his maſter Ulyſſes after twenty years abſence. At laſt the perturbation of ſudden joy ſubſided, and gave place to that calm delight which beamed in the happy countenances of theſe three dear connexions, who now ſat down together to regale on a leg of the curate's own mutton, fed on thoſe flowery downs which are acknowledged to beſtow the higheſt flavour of any part of Britain. Evans and his wife could hardly eat a bit, ſo completely were they filled with joy, and ſo intently were their thoughts and eyes fixed on their ſon; but Edward made a heavy ſtroke in the little leg, and probably would

have hid the whole of it, had he not remembered his fellow-traveller Morgan, who certainly was entitled to a ſhare: to him therefore was conſigned what remained of it, with a bottle of the curate's beſt ale; whilſt one of excellent wine, long ſtored for the preſent happy occaſion, was brought out for Ned, who partook of it perhaps with more delight than he had ever before received from any wine whatſoever. Soon after the cloth was taken away, a little boy in a white frock, with the countenance of a cherub, ſtumped into the room, and immediately took poſt by Mr. Evans's knee: he fixed his eyes beaming with lively innocence upon Edward, who, naturally fond of all children whether he was acquainted with them or not, aſked whoſe he was? and was going to careſs him. His queſtion was not immediately anſwered; when his recollection, which, however unaccountably, had been wandering before, immediately returned, and ſuggeſted to him how

how near an intereſt he had in the little innocent, who had now gone to his knee. A tear, whether of contrition or affection I will not ſay, trembled in his eye, and a bluſh of the deepeſt crimſon overſpread his countenance. His father enjoyed his confuſion, which he conſidered as a ſign of grace, but did not let him remain too long under it. "Yes! Edward," ſaid he, "he is your child: his countenance will not let you deny him, for he is the image of what you were at his age. If you have ſinned in being the cauſe of bringing this infant into the world, know that he has the greater claim upon your tenderneſs; for you have robbed him of the right of an honourable birth. Repay then the injury you have done him, by a cloſer attention; for, if you neglect him, your laſt ſin will be worſe than the firſt."

Edward, ſtill embarraſſed and abaſhed, hardly had a word to ſay. He took the little Edward from the ground, and placed him

him ſtanding on his knee; then folding his arms about him, and preſſing him to his heart, "When I deſert thee, O my child! (ſaid he) then may Heaven deſert me!"

Let thoſe who are fathers condemn this ſentiment if they can. Edward was the child of nature, and therefore he loved his natural child. And ſurely the Almighty, if he had been ſo ſevere againſt his treſpaſs as ſome unfeeling bigots repreſent him, would not have formed the infant in one of his fineſt moulds; faſhioning his limbs in all the ſymmetry of juſt proportion, and lighting up in his eyes that radiancy of apprehenſion which marked the livelineſs of that intelligence which reſided within.

The maid now coming in for this ſweet infant, relieved Edward from ſome part of his embarraſſment. When he aſked about the mother, Molly Price, his father informed him that ſhe had been married about a twelvemonth before to a young fellow a farmer's ſervant, and had lately lain

lain-in, and had behaved herſelf well and decently ſince he had been away.

The remainder of the evening Ned ſpent in giving to his father and mother a particular and intereſting detail of all his moſt remarkable adventures; during the relation of which one might trace all the paſſions alternately and ſtrongly expreſſed upon their countenances, according to the circumſtances of his narrative. His ſituation with Lady Cecilia was the only circumſtance he did not fully diſcloſe, deeming it a point of honour to keep that to himſelf until her ladyſhip ſhould think proper to avow it alſo.

And now the worthy parſon calling his little family around him, according to his invariable cuſtom, cloſed the evening with thankſgiving to Him who loveth mercy, and who had ſo lately diſpenſed it to him with liberal hand; and Edward once more preſſed that bed, the firſt on which he re-

membered ever to have ſlept, and in which he this night experienced as ſoft and as undiſturbed repoſe as health and innocence were ever bleſſed with.

In the morning Ned found himſelf quite at home, and began to betake himſelf to his old employments. His little round hat and ſwitch, which his mother had ſo often contemplated in his abſence, were ſtill remaining; and with theſe, as uſual, he paid his firſt viſit to the ſtable. There he found David Morgan equally delighted to reſume his ancient duties, and buſily employed in rubbing down the two hunters, whoſe ſkin ſhone like a new piece of the moſt gloſſy ſattin. Poor old Blackbird was ſtanding in his uſual corner; Ned patted him for old acquaintance ſake, and promiſed him good food, and a writ of eaſe for his life.

Morgan reminded Edward of the many dangerous hours they had paſſed together, particularly that day when they were ſepa-

rated by the Indians in the woods of America, and how happy the preſent moment was in compariſon.

"True!" ſaid Edward, "but if we had never been from home, we could neither have been ſenſible of the happineſs of our ſituation, nor yet have had the means equally to enjoy it." Morgan admitted this, but declared himſelf contented with the experiment he had made, and that nothing ſhould induce him to take the field again. Ned did not abſolutely make the ſame declaration, but I believe it was not very remote from his private determination.

The maid, with little Edward in her arms, now came to call Ned to breakfaſt. The child, ſmiling, ſtretched out his little hands to him. Ned took him in his arms (for nature would be obeyed), and, kiſſing him as he went, carried him into the houſe. After breakfaſt the good curate went into his garden, which it was his cuſtom to cultivate with his own hands, aſſiſted occaſionally by

hired labourers. In former times Edward uſed to ſpend many of his leiſure hours in this uſeful and healthy exerciſe, and was happy to reſume his labour this day, and aſſiſt his father to trench between his aſparagus beds, and earth up his celery. Obſerving a ſturdy boy at work, and aſking about him, he learned that he was the ſon of the poor woman who had ſo hoſpitably entertained him when he was benighted after leaving the churliſh Muckworm's, and that he was happy to repay that kindneſs by initiating this boy into the practice of gardening, and teaching him to read and write. "His mother has removed here to be in my neighbourhood," ſaid he, "and I hope has not loſt the reward of her hoſpitality."

"That journey was undertaken upon my account," ſaid Edward; "and you muſt allow me to teſtify my gratitude alſo, or at leaſt to aſſiſt you in ſhewing your own." Evans would have diſſuaded him, aſſuring him that he was himſelf fully able to adminiſter

to

to their comforts; "for," ſays he, "you do not conſider how rich I am through the bounty of the good Lord Ravenſdale." "Neither do you conſider," ſaid Ned, "how rich I am through the ſame ſource. Look at this pocket-book," added he, "and count the contents, and know that they are every ſhilling at your command."

When Evans ſaw the eight hundred pound notes, he was indeed ſomewhat ſurpriſed, and perhaps not diſpleaſed; but poſitively refuſed to accept a farthing of it, adviſing Edward to turn it to ſome account, as it was too great a ſum to lie idle. Ned gave into his hands ſix hundred pounds of it, to do with it as he thought fit, and kept the remainder as a fund for ſome benefits he meant to beſtow, and to defray the extraordinary expences he might be at on his return to Ireland. And now being near the ſpot, where, on the morning of his departure, he had planted two ſuckers, one from a white, and the other from a

purple lilac tree, with the fond though ſuperſtitious imagination of their being emblems of Cecilia and himſelf; he ſtole away from his father to take a ſecret look at them, where he had the ſatisfaction to find them ſtill thriving, and ſo grown into one, for they had been twiſted together, as to appear but one buſh, which in the ſeaſon bore a profuſion of white and purple flowers. The circumſtance, though in itſelf trifling, was yet pleaſing, and raiſed a ſenſation of tender delight in his heart, ſoftened by love, yet happy in the certain knowledge of that love being ſincerely returned.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXII.

FOR ſeveral days Edward amuſed himſelf with viſiting his old acquaintances, particularly Farmer Watkin, in the neighbourhood; and he prevailed with his father to take a ride over as far as Conway, to ſee Doctor Jones, who was delighted to find him returned ſafe to his own country, and to hear ſuch good accounts of Lady Cecilia, for whom he entertained the moſt affectionate reſpect ever ſince ſhe had been his patient. It was on the evening of that day they had been at Conway, a little after dinner, the poſt from Bangor ſounded his horn at Evans's gate, when Edward went out, and received a letter, which he knew to be her ladyſhip's hand: he retired with it to his own room, and there read to the following purport:

" Ravenſdale, Nov. 6, 1783.

" MY DEAR EDWARD !

" I ſit down to take my willing pen to inform you of the moſt material occurrences which have happened here ſince you left us, and hope this letter will find you ſafe arrived and happy in the embraces of your good father and mother, who will ever be dear to my affections on their own account as well as yours. But when I tell you I take up my willing pen, I muſt confeſs to you, it is becauſe I always find a ſecret pleaſure in diſcloſing my heart to you, let its contents be what they may; and not that I have at this time any thing pleaſing to communicate, for, oh! my Edward! my father's ſituation chills me with horror, as I am ſure it will you, when I tell you I fear his intellects are deranged. The very day you left us, I went up to his room, and found him exceedingly low. He aſked

for

for you. I told him you were gone as you informed him the day before, and that you had deſired me to preſent his lordſhip with your dutiful reſpects—'Lordſhip!' ſaid he—'Lordſhip!—damned title!'—and he gave a deep groan.—It harrowed up my ſoul, for it was the firſt time in my life I had ever heard an impatient word paſs his lips, and I ſaw no occaſion for it at the time.—'Did he ſay when he would return?' (ſaid he again, meaning you)—I ſaid you promiſed to return before Chriſtmas. 'I wiſh he was come,' ſaid he: 'he would protect me from that fiend.'—'What fiend, my lord?' ſaid I.—'Call me not lord! That fiend that tears my ſoul—he never troubles me when Mr. Evans is near.' I thought it needleſs to make any reply, but ſurely I would have given the earth to have had you back again; yet what purpoſe could it have anſwered? I ſent immediately for Doctor Burton, as you had recommended to me. He was not at home, but he was ſo

good as to come the next day. I told him my apprehenſions. He was exceedingly ſhocked, but promiſed that he would not leave us for ſome days. Laſt night he took me aſide—'My dear Lady Cecilia!' ſaid he, 'you muſt not be alarmed. I hope your noble father will do well, for he ſeems already better; but he has taken an imagination into his head, which I ſuppoſe to be entirely nervous, and the effect of the late misfortunes in his family, which, however, he has diſcloſed to me in ſuch a collected manner, that, for his peace and yours, I am determined to make enquiry about it, and, if I find any reality in it, to ſearch it to the bottom.'—'Good God, Doctor!' ſaid I, 'what can it be?' 'It is of a very delicate nature,' ſaid he; 'yet I think it proper to communicate it to you, that you may not be ſhocked with any imperfect hints of it that might drop from himſelf. His lordſhip has taken it into his head that he has uſurped the title, and cauſed the infant

ſon

ſon of the late Lord Rivers, his nephew, to be murdered twenty-three years ago.'—'Good God!' ſaid I, 'it is impoſſible! My father is incapable, and has been all his life, of doing a baſe thing by any mortal—But murder!—it is madneſs.'—'Indeed, Lady Cecilia! I think ſo too. Nevertheleſs, he affirms that he has done it by the agency of one Laurence Flinn, who lived with the laſt Lord Rivers at the time, and who now keeps an inn in the county of Clare; and that he not only ſet him up in that inn, but pays him an annuity of one hundred pounds to this hour to keep the matter ſecret. I ſhall go,' ſaid Doctor Burton, 'tomorrow morning to ſee if there be any ſuch man as this Flinn, and, if there is, to probe this ſtory to the bottom. Lord Ravenſdale has deſired me to do ſo, and ſeemed infinitely relieved when I promiſed to obey him.' My Edward! he has left us this morning; and though I have not the ſmalleſt conception of its being any thing

elſe than a chimæra; yet I muſt lament the ſtate of mind that could create ſuch a horrible fancy, and wait with infinite anxiety the doctor's return. I am uneaſy too, in a high degree, about Mrs. Waldron. She is the grandmother of this child; and if ſhe ſhould get any intimation of this ſtrange imagination, it would ſet her diſtracted alſo, or at leaſt make ſuch a noiſe in the country as I cannot think upon without horror.

"Amidſt all theſe diſturbing circumſtances, I thought I would give vent to my feelings, by diſcloſing them to you.—Is there a thought in my heart that I do not wiſh you to know?—No, my Edward! When I learn the whole truth, you ſhall know it all; and till then I remain

Your ever faithful and affectionate

CECILIA RIVERS."

The contents of this letter filled Edward with aſtoniſhment, and alſo with deep concern. His veneration for Lord Ravenſ-

dale

dale was almoſt as unbounded as his love for Cecilia; yet he did not flatter himſelf as ſhe did, that the whole was a mere chimæra, ſeeing Doctor Burton thought the circumſtances ſo clearly related, that he undertook a long journey to bring them to the light. Should they prove true according to Lord Ravenſdale's own confeſſion, the conſequences muſt be fatal, no leſs than bringing his head to the block: and what effect ſo horrible a cataſtrophe might have on poor Lady Cecilia, who, though innocent as an angel, muſt yet ſhare in the diſgrace, was ſuch as he trembled to think on, knowing her high ſenſe of honour, and the tender and dutiful affection ſhe bore towards her father. For ſome days theſe diſtracting thoughts deprived him both of ſleep and appetite, and greatly alarmed his father, to whom he could not impart the cauſe of them. He was alſo at a great loſs what to ſay to Lady Cecilia, the ſubject was ſo delicate; and he did not, like her lady-

ſhip, flatter himſelf that the perturbations of Lord Ravenſdale's conſcience were merely the imagination of a diſordered brain, ſeeing that on all other ſubjects he was perfectly collected and compoſed. To delay writing to her, however, was what neither his love nor his good manners would allow, and he therefore by that very poſt addreſſed to her the following lines:

"Ti-gwin, Nov. 11, 1783.

"DEAR LADY CECILIA!

"How impoſſible did I think it, that any letter which your ladyſhip ſhould do me the favour to write to me, ſhould ever be a cauſe of uneaſineſs or regret! yet I confeſs, that which I this day received has filled me with both. The extraordinary matters it diſcloſes are in the higheſt degree alarming, in whatever light I can view them; and though I think with you, it is impoſſible that your noble father could be guilty of what he apprehends, yet the collected-

neſs

neſs of his mind on other matters ſeems to juſtify a fear that it cannot be altogether without ſome foundation. I wait with the utmoſt impatience to know the reſult of Doctor Burton's enquiries; and be they what they may, I am determined to ſhorten my ſtay here, and haſten back to Ireland, that in every poſſible exigency I may be near at hand to yield you all the comfort or aſſiſtance that the moſt devoted heart can give you. O my Cecilia! how often in ſome of thoſe tender meetings with which you have indulged me, how often have you wiſhed that you had been born in an humbler ſtation, and that even the mountains of Wales had ſheltered your cradle!—Cheriſh the thought! and let thoſe mountains hide in their deepeſt and moſt retired boſoms, two hearts which live but for each other, and which, when united, will find all their heaven within themſelves. May God preſerve you in every trial, and grant a favourable development of the myſterious circum-

circumſtance you have related, and a happy meeting with your moſt ſincere and faithfully devoted

EDWARD EVANS!"

As ſoon as Edward had finiſhed this letter, he ordered Morgan to ſaddle Brilliant, which was the name he had given to his favourite horſe, and determined to ride himſelf to Bangor, to put it into the poſt-office with his own hands. He had not been gone an hour when a poſt-chaiſe drove to the door, in which was a gentleman alone, and ſeemingly a clergyman. Another chaiſe waited at the outer gate, in which was a man ſeemingly an old ſoldier, between two underſtrappers of the law. David Morgan happened to be out of the way when the carriage came to the door; and Mr. Evans was therefore obliged to go to receive the gentleman himſelf. This gentleman was Doctor Burton. Evans ſoon ſaw he was a clergyman of diſtinction,

tion, and of courſe aſked him to alight. Doctor Burton introduced himſelf to the worthy curate with that eaſe which always accompanies men who have kept the beſt company, and aſked if his friend Edward was at home? It was with great regret he heard he had gone to Bangor but an hour before; but as he was expected back perhaps to dinner, or at leaſt in the evening, Doctor Burton accepted of Evans's preſſing invitation to ſtay. He was then introduced to Mrs. Evans, who offered him the refreſhment of a glaſs of wine; and the three perſons in the other chaiſe were invited into the kitchen. As Evans had been well acquainted with Doctor Burton's character by Edward, and his connection with the Ravenſdale family, he began with making affectionate enquiries about Lady Cecilia, whoſe hoſt he had ſo long the honour to be; and alſo about the Earl, to whom he lay under ſo many obligations. Doctor Burton anſwered in general

neral terms that Lady Cecilia was well, but that his lordſhip, ever ſince the death of his laſt ſon, had been in a very melancholy ſituation. "Indeed, Mr. Evans," ſaid he, "it is in relation to a moſt extraordinary circumſtance concerning that nobleman, which I beg leave to communicate to your private ear, that I have taken the liberty to call upon you; and I muſt plead my acquaintance with your gallant and valuable ſon for my excuſe." Evans replied, that Doctor Burton could ſtand in need of no excuſe for honouring any perſon with his viſit. And Mrs. Evans now withdrawing, the Doctor opened his buſineſs in the following terms:

"I have ſaid, Mr. Evans, that an extraordinary circumſtance relative to Lord Ravenſdale has induced me to call here this day; and indeed it is one ſo ſurpriſing, that no perſon who knew him ſo long and ſo intimately as I have done could have ſuppoſed it poſſible to have happened; yet

yet the fact is indubitable, as you ſhall hear. —His lordſhip has always been eſteemed a nobleman of the moſt diſintereſted generoſity and unblemiſhed virtue; and, excepting in one inſtance, which the juſtice of Heaven ſeems to be now bringing to the light, he has really deſerved this character. But then—that one inſtance of frailty is a crime of ſuch enormous magnitude, that a whole life of ſubſequent virtue cannot atone for it. You are perhaps already acquainted, that the laſt Lord Rivers, who was nephew to the earl we are ſpeaking of, had married contrary to his father's inclination, who in conſequence would never ſee him more; and had the further cruelty to withdraw the allowance ſuitable to his rank, which he had hitherto given him, leaving him to ſubſiſt, with his wife, on the pay of his commiſſion, a captaincy of dragoons. His uncle, the preſent unfortunate earl, really did all in his power

to

to reconcile his brother to his ſon, but without effect; and when that failed, he ſupported him himſelf with a handſome annuity, under certain ſtipulations of reimburſement when he ſhould ſucceed to the eſtate. This event never happened. He died ſoon after, leaving his wife big with child, who lived only to be delivered of a ſon, and died alſo. Lady Rivers had a mother, who is ſtill living, but unfortunately was in a diſtant part of the country at the time; and Colonel Rivers, as he was then called, happening to be in the neighbourhood, a ſudden thought (oh! that it could be blotted out of the regiſters of the Almighty!) occurred to him, that if the new-born infant could be any way diſpoſed of, ſo as never to make his appearance in his real character, the injury would be nothing to the child, and the advantage gained to himſelf would be immenſe. He ventured to ſound at a diſ-

tance

tance one Lawrence Flinn, who had been ſervant to Lord Rivers, and whom, alas! he found too ready to come into his meaſures, for the conſideration of a ſum of money—conſiderable indeed to him, but little to give in exchange for his ſoul." "Alas!" ſaid Evans, "what would either have gained, though they had got the whole world?"—"Colonel Rivers returned to his own houſe; and ſoon after he was informed that the child had died at nurſe; and the ſame account was tranſmitted to Mrs. Waldron, mother to Lady Rivers. Here the matter reſted; and all the world ſuppoſed that the caſe was really ſo. When Lord Ravenſdale died, Colonel Rivers, as next heir, aſſumed the title and eſtate; and has ever ſince maintained the moſt noble and irreproachable character that is any where to be met with. But the all-ſeeing eye of Providence diſcerned this deep-laid train of guilt, and has commiſ-

commiſſioned his great vicegerent Conſcience to bring it to light. Lord Ravenſdale has really a deep ſenſe of religion, and a thorough perſuaſion that there is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death in which the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves." "It is a true perſuaſion," ſaid Evans, "and a great pity he did not recollect it ſooner." Every perſon muſt lament it," ſaid Doctor Burton. "But to proceed. The late grievous misfortunes in his family he conſiders, and perhaps juſtly, as the beginning of Almighty vengeance; and it was under this impreſſion that he unburthened his conſcience to me, by diſcloſing all that I have now related to you."

A perſon at this time wanting to ſpeak to Mr. Evans, he was obliged to apologize to Doctor Burton for quitting the room, but promiſed to be back in a few minutes; and we will avail ourſelves, in

this

this interval of the narrative, of the opportunity it gives us to reflect by ourselves upon the vanity of all happineſs founded on the baſis of worldly conſiderations.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIII.

THE worthy curate, whoſe curioſity (as we may ſuppoſe) was wound up to the very tiptoe of expectation, haſtened to return to the parlour, and the good doctor reſumed his narrative.—"I own to you, Mr. Evans," ſaid he, "when his lordſhip, in the agonies of his ſoul, made this confeſſion to me, I hardly knew how to believe my ears, and ſometimes thought the whole was a mere chimæra of his own brain, formed by the influence of a ſtrong nervous affection: but then he was ſo clear and connected in all the circumſtances, and expreſſed ſuch a deep and contrite ſenſe of his tranſgreſſion, that I determined, both for his peace, and in purſuance of what I conceived to be my own duty, to ſearch the matter to the bottom. The firſt ſtep I took was to go to this

this Lawrence Flinn, who I underſtood kept an inn, between ſixty and ſeventy miles away from Ravenſdale, in a remote part of the county Clare. I found this man at home; and taking him to a place where there could be no liſteners, I told him I came to him, through the ſpecial agency of God, to enquire what he had done with the infant ſon of the late Lord Rivers.—It is impoſſible for any language to expreſs the aſtoniſhment and confuſion into which this abrupt and peremptory queſtion threw him.—'Tell the truth,' ſaid I, 'and the whole truth, as you ſhall anſwer at the dreadful bar of God!'—The fellow was a Papiſt, and not a little burthened with ſuperſtition.—He fell on his knees, and, after two or three croſſings, begged I would not hang him. 'What have you done with the child?' ſaid I: 'have you murdered him?' 'No: God forbid!' ſaid he: 'he may be living yet, for aught I know:—I have neither ſeen or heard of him theſe three-

and-twenty years.' 'Oh! thou agent of Satan!' ſaid I; 'what haſt thou done with him?—Thinkeſt thou that I am ignorant of thy vile colluſion with him who calls himſelf Lord Ravenſdale?'—The wretch, trembling and pale as death, confeſſed, that ſeduced by the great offers which Lord Ravenſdale, then Colonel Rivers, had made him, to put the child out of the way of being troubleſome, he had prevailed with his wife, who nurſed it, to ſay it died in a fit; and they actually got a fictitious infant buried as the child of Lord Rivers. In the mean time he gave the real child to one Michael Carrol, a ſoldier, whoſe wife was giving ſuck; and with the child he gave him twenty guineas to carry it to London to put it in the Foundling Hoſpital; and he told him it was the natural child of a gentlewoman who wiſhed it to be concealed, and that it had been chriſtened by the name of Edward. 'This,' added the wretch, 'is all I know of the matter,

matter, as I ſhall anſwer at the day of judgment.' 'A dreadful day indeed it will be to you,' ſaid I; 'but where is your wife?' 'Dead,' ſaid he, 'many years: ſhe did not long ſurvive the loſs of the infant." 'And what is become of that Michael Carrol?' ſaid I: 'is he dead alſo?' 'No,' ſaid he, 'I believe not: I know a few years ago he was living in Dublin, a ſoldier in the Old Man's Hoſpital." 'Well,' ſaid I, 'Mr. Flinn, you have a great deal to anſwer for, more than all the Ravenſdale eſtate would make you amends for: but go directly to Lord Ravenſdale, who is lying under all the agonies of a guilty conſcience for his ſhare in this nefarious buſineſs;—go, and comfort him with the knowledge that there is at leaſt a poſſibility that the child may be yet alive, and that he may not, as he fears, have his blood to anſwer for.' I wrote a letter by him to the unhappy lord, and I did not quit his houſe till I ſaw him fairly ſet off upon his

journey.—I ſet out myſelf immediately after for Dublin, and enquired for Carrol, whom I found living, as Flinn told me, in the Royal Hoſpital. I immediately got a warrant for apprehending him, and he was put under the cuſtody of two conſtables, and theſe three men are now in your kitchen!" "Well," ſaid Mr. Evans, "and what does Carrol ſay? What did he do with the little innocent?" "Carrol acknowledges the having received the child from Flinn, with the twenty guineas; and that he and his wife, who ſuckled it with her own infant, did leave Ireland with the intention to put the child into the Foundling Hoſpital at London, as had been agreed: that they came over in the packet to Holyhead for that purpoſe, and ſometimes walked, and ſometimes got a lift, as it happened: that in going through the village of St. Aſaph, it chanced to be a very warm day, and they were both greatly fatigued; when reſting themſelves under a hedge

which

which encloſed a little garden, they ſaw a gentleman walking two or three times diſconſolately, and at laſt ſit down in an arbour, that was at the end of it; he ſeemed to be a clergyman, and in ſome diſtreſs." [Here Evans ſeemed greatly agitated, and wept]. Doctor Burton continued: "Carrol and his wife thought this a good opportunity to get rid of their charge, and ſave all farther trouble and expence, by throwing the poor infant on the mercy of this gentleman. The woman, he ſays, took the infant, which was ſleeping in her arms, and gave it to her huſband, when ſhe retired:—he took a ſmall ſlip of paper, on which he wrote the name Edward with a pencil; and, being a papiſt alſo, and as ſuperſtitious as you pleaſe, he made with a penknife the ſign of the croſs on the back of the infant's neck, to make it cry, and laid it down juſt at the back of the arbour, into which he ſaw the gentleman enter. He retired a few paces to watch what would

enſue, when preſently he ſaw that meek and charitable ſtranger come from the arbour to where the child was, and take him up in his arms. 'Whoever thou art,' ſaid he, 'ſweet innocent, thou art welcome; I accept thee as a preſent from God, and thou ſhalt be my child.' The words were ſo remarkable, he ſays, they yet ſound in his ears; and immediately after the gentleman with the infant returned into the houſe." Evans, all whoſe tender paſſions were worked up to the higheſt pitch, could contain no longer; he burſt into a flood of tears, to the ſurpriſe of Doctor Burton, and, falling on his knees, cried out, "Gracious God, whoſe path is in the deep waters, and whoſe ways are paſt finding out, I humbly adore thy providence, and thank thee that thou haſt made me an inſtrument of ſhewing forth thy mercies to mankind."—Riſing he ſaid, "Oh, Doctor Burton! I am the man—I was that afflicted clergyman who found that infant

in

in the ſituation you mention; and Edward, my Edward, whom you know, and whom Lord Ravenſdale has ſo long entertained, is that infant himſelf." Doctor Burton's aſtoniſhment was now not leſs than Evans's, neither was his joy leſs than his aſtoniſhment. His joy would have been great whereever he had been able to diſcover the child; but to find him in the amiable and accompliſhed Edward, who was already ſo dear to all the family, was an unlooked-for happineſs, that ſeemed to be the peculiar boon of Providence himſelf. Evans now begged that Carrol, with his attendants, might be brought in. he there related the whole ſtory again circumſtantially with his own mouth. Evans went up ſtairs and returned with a ſmall drawer of an eſcritoir in his hand. "Here, Doctor Burton! here, Michael Carrol! here is a depoſit which I have now kept by me theſe twenty-three years: here is the little frock in which I found my dear Edward, and here is the ſlip of

paper with his name Edward written, which I found with it.—See, Carrol, do you know it ?" Carrol croſſed himſelf, and ſaid he would know it in any part of the world.

The matter was now ſufficiently clear; and Carrol being diſmiſſed, Mr. Evans ſaid, " Well do I remember, Doctor Burton, that morning, which I then thought ſo unhappy, but which, by the relation you have now heard, has turned out ſo fortunate. It was on the ſeventeenth of July, 1761, about eleven in the morning, a poor little infant, the only one I had, who had been born about a fortnight before, expired in his mother's arms: he had been ill about two days, with what the midwives call inward fits, and I was ſitting by his mother's bed-ſide when I ſaw him breathe his laſt. We had loſt a little girl ſome years before, who had attained her ſeventh year, and theſe two were all the children we ever had. My wife's grief was inexpreſſibly diſtreſſing to me when

added

added to my own; and when I ſaw the child was certainly gone, I went down, as you have heard related, into the garden to get a little freſh air, and retired to that little arbour to ſhed my tears in ſecret. There the loſs was inſtantly ſupplied in the ſurpriſing manner you have heard. It ſtruck me at the time as if it was the Lord's doing, and I carried the little babe up in my arms to my wife. 'The Lord,' ſaid I, 'hath taken away, and the Lord hath given; bleſſed be the name of the Lord!' My wife was amazed; but being naturally fond of children, ſhe accepted the preſent, and put it to her breaſt: the child ſucked heartily, and looked like a little angel. She ſaw blood upon it's frock; the ſtain of which you may ſee ſtill remaining: we then ſtripped the babe, and found it proceeded from the mark of the croſs, which, as Carrol ſaid, he had cut on the back of its neck. The child was a lovely infant, apparently about two months old, in high health and

vigour, and ſoon found the way to endear itſelf to my wife, and, I may add, to myſelf; ſo that if he had been ten times our child we could not have loved him better. From that hour to this we have had nothing with him but pleaſure; and ſurely it is needleſs to tell you, that a more beautiful figure or a more virtuous mind can hardly meet in man. He himſelf knows nothing of his deſtination. He believes himſelf to be our child, but I will venture to engage that he will fill the high ſtation to which he is entitled with as much grace and dignity, as he has the humble one to which he has been accuſtomed with cheerfulneſs and contentment." "I know enough of him," ſaid Doctor Burton, "to vouch for all you ſay, and to aſſure you that I think it the greateſt bleſſing that could have befallen him, that, unknowing of his rank, he has been educated under your care." Mrs. Evans now came into the room; ſhe had got ſome intimation of

the

the diſcovery from the people in the kitchen, and her huſband and Doctor Burton explained it to her fully." "But how," ſaid ſhe to Doctor Burton, "did you not meet Edward (for I muſt call him ſo) by the way? did you not come from Bangor?" "No," ſaid the doctor, "I came from Conway. We had been at St. Aſaph, expecting that Carrol would have brought us to the very gentleman, or at leaſt the houſe, where he had depoſited the infant. He did indeed bring us to the houſe, but no perſon there could give us any information about the matter: however, upon enquiry, an elderly woman who kept a ſhop told us, that at that time we mentioned, the houſe was inhabited by you, and that poſſibly you might give us information about any matter of conſequence we might deſire to know. It was alſo my intention to call here in my way back, for, as I ſailed from Dublin to Parkgate, it was not in my power to do it before; but no circumſtance could

give me equal ſatisfaction with finding in this houſe the end of all my enquiries in the perſon of that amiable youth you have hitherto called your ſon, and who will always honour and reſpect you both as if you were indeed his parents." This converſation had hardly ended, when Edward himſelf arrived. He had rode hard from Bangor, and the air and exerciſe had contributed to enliven his ſpirits, and recall the animated glow of health and cheerfulneſs to his countenance, which Lady Cecilia's intelligence had ſomewhat abated. When Morgan told him Doctor Burton was in the parlour, and had ſome great news to diſcloſe to him, he flew like lightning to the houſe, impatient to be informed of his dear Cecilia, and not dreaming that he himſelf was the object of the intelligence. When he entered the room he immediately advanced to his reverend and reſpected friend, who ſaw in his open countenance and beaming eye the ſincerity of that pleaſure with which

which he took him by the hand and welcomed him to the humble hoſpitality of Ti-gwin.

It was agreed between Evans and Doctor Burton not to mention any thing to Edward of his exaltation, till after dinner. His enquiries therefore about Lord Ravenſdale and Lady Cecilia were anſwered in general terms; by which, however, he had the ſatisfaction to be informed that her ladyſhip was in perfect health, and that ſome events had taken place which were likely to reſtore his lordſhip too—an intelligence in which Ned expreſſed the moſt heart-felt ſatisfaction, and which enabled him to play his part at the neat and plentiful meal which the good Mrs. Evans now uſhered in, with all his accuſtomed appetite and cheerfulneſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIV.

AFTER the cloth was removed, and a glaſs or two of excellent old Oporto had gone round, the converſation about Lord Ravenſdale was renewed, and Edward expreſſed much anxiety on his account; particularly as he acknowledged to have heard from Lady Cecilia that the ſtate of his mind was highly alarming. "Pray, Doctor Burton," added he, "can you give me any new information upon that ſubject?"—"I can aſſure you," replied the doctor, "that Lord Ravenſdale is at this time in perfect health, both of mind and body."—"God bleſs me!" ſaid Edward, "you ſurpriſe me. How is that poſſible, doctor? It was but within theſe few days I received a letter from Lady Cecilia, aſſuring me the very contrary, and that you had left Ravenſdale-

houſe

houſe on ſome important buſineſs relative to his illneſs, of which, however, I am ignorant. How then can you tell me that his lordſhip is in perfect health?"—"All this is very true," replied the doctor; "yet I ſtill ſolemnly vouch for the fact. Lady Cecilia does not know Lord Ravenſdale as well as I do—nay, ſhe was not with him at the time ſhe wrote that letter."—"My good doctor!" ſaid Ned, "if his lordſhip's complaint has any thing of phrenſy in it, I am afraid he has bit you in ſome of your communications together, and has infected you with his diſeaſe."—"No!" ſaid he; "I appeal to my venerable friends here, Mr. and Mrs. Evans, if I am not perfectly correct, for his lordſhip is in this houſe at this inſtant."—"Oh! where?" ſaid Edward, and he looked at the worthy curate for an anſwer. Doctor Burton roſe, and with a benignant, but yet ſerious aſpect, ſaid, "Thou art the man." "Yes! truly," ſaid Mr. Evans; "my Edward, your real

name

name and deſignation is Edward Rivers, Earl of Ravenſdale."

Mrs. Evans roſe, and folded him to her boſom, and ſaid, "We do not jeſt or deceive you, my Edward! I am not your mother, though I have a mother's affection to you; you loſt your mother the day you were born; you are really whom we tell you, the true Earl of Ravenſdale."

Edward was for a few moments thoughtful and ſilent. He ſaw both Mr. and Mrs. Evans in tears, yet tears that did not ſeem to flow from ſorrow, but from tenderneſs and ſatisfaction. "My father!" ſaid he, "my mother! for I know you by no other names, nor ever ſhall forego the bleſſings I have received from that dear connection; I look to you, and to Doctor Burton here, for the explanation of this ſtrange myſtery, which, if true, however advantageous it may be to me in a worldly view, will hardly compenſate to me the regret with which I am informed that I am not your ſon."

"My

"My Edward!" ſaid Evans, "for I muſt ſtill call you ſo, do you recollect the morning that I parted with you at Holyhead, when you firſt went to join your regiment?"—"Yes," ſaid Edward, "perfectly; I never can forget it.—I remember well, that juſt before I went down to the ſhore to embark, you took me by the hand, and told me you had ſomething to reveal to me, which might ſome time or other be of conſequence to me, but at that time could be of none, and therefore you ſuppreſſed it. And I alſo well remember, my father, the preſent that you made me immediately after, and the promiſe which I gave you relating to it, and which I truſt I ever ſhall perform."

"Well!" ſaid Mr. Evans, "the circumſtance which I intended to reveal to you, was, that you were not my ſon—but as I at that time did not know to whom you were indebted for exiſtence, nor ever indeed till this day, that the providence of God has

has ſo wonderfully brought it to light, had any information on the ſubject, I thought to acquaint you with the circumſtance would at that time have ſerved only to afflict you, and therefore I ſuppreſſed it. But now I have to give you joy of it with the moſt heart-felt ſatisfaction, as the fact is indubitable, and all the circumſtances which led to the diſcovery, ſuch as ſingularly point out the all-directing finger of Providence, whoſe eyes are on the ways of men, and who ſpieth out all their goings."

Mr. Evans now gave Edward a minute detail of all thoſe circumſtances relative to his firſt finding him, with which the reader is already acquainted; and Doctor Burton related Lord Ravenſdale's contrition and agony of mind, and the active part which he himſelf took in ſearching out the matter to the bottom, which was now elucidated beyond all doubt, and for the happy iſſue of which he ſincerely added his congratulations;

tions; "and I truſt," added he, "that your Lordſhip will long live to enjoy your hereditary honours and great eſtates, ſo as even to ſurpaſs the illuſtrious anceſtors from whom you are deſcended." "Gentlemen!" ſaid Edward, "the circumſtances you have related are ſo extraordinary, that if I had heard them from any leſs authority I could not have given credit to them; and even now, cannot help finding myſelf very highly embarraſſed by them. I beſeech you, therefore, not to call me by any title which I have not been accuſtomed to bear, and which I certainly cannot believe I have any right to, until it is recogniſed by the legiſlature of the kingdom. My father," ſaid he, turning to the good curate, whoſe eyes were gliſtening in tears, "let me be your Edward ſtill, and not loſe the endearing appellation of your ſon (to me the moſt grateful title I ſhall ever bear) until there ſhall be a neceſſity for doing ſo." "My Edward!" ſaid Evans,

"you

" you will be ever dear to me, by what-ever title you are called; nor can the ſplen-dour of rank add any thing to the affection which I felt for you when all your poſſeſ-ſions were a linen frock. If you take a plea-ſure in ſtill calling me your father, ſurely I muſt have both pride and pleaſure in calling you my ſon." " Such," replied Edward, " I am, and ſuch I ever deſire to remain. The father to whom I owe my body I ne-ver ſaw, and the unfortunate mother who brought me into the world, only beheld me, and loſt ſight of me for ever. Here is the mother (taking Mrs. Evans by the hand) on whoſe breaſt I hung, the firſt face I ever beheld with attachment. Here is the father (taking Evans in his other hand), who, owing me no duty, fulfilled all the moſt tender parent could perform. To my natural parents I indeed owe my body, who, however, never had it in their power to beſtow on it a ſingle comfort. To you I owe my mind. You formed my heart;

nay,

nay, you alſo cheriſhed that body which I received from others, and which, but for your care, would never have attained the ſtrength or ſtature of a man. To you then am I juſtly indebted for both; and every faculty, both of my body and mind, ſhall be exerted to repay the immenſe debt of duty, love, and gratitude which I owe you." Edward, who was ſtill holding both their hands, with theſe words raiſed them to his lips, and, impreſſing upon them alternately the warm kiſs of true affection, returned to his ſeat. The graceful manner in which the noble youth expreſſed theſe endearing ſentiments, and the calm tranquillity with which he received the ſudden intelligence of his great and unexpected elevation, confirmed Doctor Burton in the high opinion he had before formed, both of his virtue and his underſtanding, and raiſed in him the moſt juſtifiable expectations that he would be an honour and a bleſſing to the country which was going to claim him.

him. Evans and his wife were melted into the ſofteſt tenderneſs by the affectionate ſweetneſs of his behaviour; and they were all in danger of growing too ſerious, had not Edward filled a bumper to the health and perfect recovery of peace and happineſs of the old Earl, whom he declared that, next to Evans, he loved and revered of all men living. This was followed by another bumper to Lady Cecilia; and the glaſs beginning to circulate again freely, carried round with it mirth, freedom, and good humour. They continued their hilarity as long as they could within the bounds of that perfect temperance which neither Evans nor Doctor Burton ever tranſgreſſed; and as ſoon as the glaſſes were taken away, Edward went out to look after Brilliant and Belliſarius, his two hunters, for whom he had conceived a very warm affection, and did not think them unworthy of being ſometimes rubbed down even by an Earl. He was actually amuſing himſelf

ſelf with this employment when David Morgan entered the ſtable. Edward perceived an unuſual ſhyneſs in David, who ſtood at a diſtance with his hat off, and neither ſaid nor did any thing. "What's the matter with you, David?" ſaid he: "have you got any bad news from Moll Doran?" "No, God bleſs your honour! but I hear your honour is a lord." "Well, and are you afraid of a lord? or are you ſorry if I ſhould be one?" "No, pleaſe your lordſhip! but I did not know as how whether your lordſhip would chooſe to ſpeak to ſuch a poor man as I." "Is that the way you would ſerve your old friends, David, if you too ſhould turn out to be a lord?" "Lord help me!" ſaid David, "how could I be a lord?" "Nay, I do not know," ſaid Edward; "I am ſure I thought as little of being one two hours ago. But know this, David, that whether I be a lord or not, I never ſhall forget that I am a man, nor be unmindful of thoſe who have

have aſſiſted and ſhared with me in the diſtreſſes which man is liable to." "Now, God bleſs your lordſhip! for I wiſh your lordſhip was a king." "I ſuppoſe you think that would be better for you." "I ſhould hope ſo," ſaid David. "Indeed, David, it is a great doubt whether it would or not; but I have no doubt but that it would be much worſe for myſelf; nor do I believe, David, that I can be happier in any ſtation, or under any name, than I have been under that of Edward Evans, by which name I deſire you will continue to call me untill I tell you that I am entitled to any other." "Why, and are you not then a lord?" ſaid David. "I am told ſo, I confeſs," ſaid Edward; "but I do not know it; and till I do, I ſhall content myſelf with the name I have always borne, and which I never wiſhed to change: and ſo, David, finiſh the horſes, and prepare for a viſit to Moll Doran, for I think we ſhall ſoon be for Ireland again."

Ned then returned to the houſe; and David wondered at the indifference with which he treated his title and 16,000l. a-year. If I had got (thought he) but the ſixteen-hundredth part of it, it would have put me out of my ſenſes—Surely maſter has a ſoul that cannot be changed either by the happineſs or the miſery of this world.

When Edward returned to the parlour, Doctor Burton and Mr. Evans were ſtill talking of the train of wonderful incidents which led to the intereſting diſcovery they had made; in which nothing appeared more extraordinary, nor more clearly manifeſted the interference of a particular providence, than that when Ned had ſuffered ſhipwreck, and been ſaved almoſt by miracle, he ſhould have been carried to the houſe of the neareſt connexion he had in the world, and ſheltered in the boſom of one who did not know ſhe was giving protection to the child of her daughter. "Are you certain, Doctor Burton," ſaid Edward,

" that Mrs. Waldron did not know or ſuſpect that I was in any way related to her?" " I believe not," replied the Doctor; " I left her at Ravenſdale, and never heard of her ever having intimated any thing of the kind." " I cannot be certain either," ſaid Edward; " but ſhe has ſeveral times expreſſed herſelf to me in terms ſomewhat enigmatical, which, I confeſs, at the time they were ſpoken, I did not entirely comprehend, but which lead me to imagine that by ſome means or other ſhe had information that I was her grandſon." " This is truly extraordinary," ſaid Doctor Burton, " for I cannot conceive by what means ſhe could have any ſuch information, unleſs it were by ſome divine communication." " That I cannot pretend to ſay," replied Edward, " neither can I believe that Heaven in theſe days diſpenſes miraculous communications, eſpecially where the object does not juſtify the interference: but certain it is that ſhe has more than once made

uſe

uſe of ſentiments and expreſſions to me, when alone, that now convince me that ſhe has had ſome knowledge of the matter, though I cannot form any idea by what means ſhe attained it." "This will be a very intereſting enquiry," ſaid the Doctor, "which I ſhall not fail to make as ſoon as I have the pleaſure to ſee Mrs. Waldron again." "I agree with Edward," ſaid Mr. Evans, "that communications ſtrictly miraculous are never now indulged by Heaven to mankind for any purpoſe whatſoever, and far leſs for one merely ſecular and private; but to a being who has all the events that can poſſibly happen in the univerſe abſolutely in his power, and at the ſame time who poſſeſſes the moſt perfect knowledge of every thought of every heart that ever was or ever will be—I cannot conceive it difficult for ſuch a being ſo to direct the ordinary occurrences of things, as to ſuggeſt what ideas he pleaſes to the mind, and this, ſtrictly ſpeaking, without

any miraculous interference; and ſomething of this ſort may have happened to Mrs. Waldron; but as you ſay, Doctor, it is an enquiry that to us, at leaſt, muſt be highly intereſting."

The tea-equipage being now introduced, put an end to this diſquiſition. Ned, as uſual, handed the kettle and the bread and butter. After tea the Doctor and the good Curate took a hit at back-gammon, and Edward ſought in his own room a ſhort retirement to reflect on the ſurpriſing change in his ſituation.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXV.

THOUGH Edward had betrayed no visible emotion on being made acquainted with his great elevation, we are not to suppose that he was indifferent about it, or by any means insensible to the many advantages of high birth and a great fortune. He must of necessity then have felt a very considerable degree of internal complacency and satisfaction in the intelligence which had that day been communicated to him; but the circumstance in it which he contemplated with the greatest delight, was the situation it placed him in with respect to Lady Cecilia, on whom he could now confer a higher title than that which she had been accustomed to enjoy; and instead of receiving from her disinterested love the possession of a great estate, he could ma-

niſeſt the ſincerity of his own, by laying that very eſtate at her feet. Theſe were the contemplations which filled his heart with ſenſations of the pureſt and moſt lively joy, and which he was indulging alone with all the ſecrecy of ſilent rapture, when his meditations were ſuddenly diſturbed by the noiſe of a carriage and horſes driving to the door. Mr. and Mrs. Evans were ſurpriſed who this new viſitor could be; and Edward went out to ſee: he met a lady juſt alighting from the chaiſe, whom, as it was night, he did not immediately diſcover; but whom, as ſoon as ſhe approached the parlour, he found to be Mrs. Waldron herſelf; it was in the ſame moment ſhe firſt diſcovered that it was Edward who conducted her. She turned inſtantly to him before ſhe ſpoke to any other of the company. "Oh! Edward!" ſaid ſhe, "my ſon! my ſon! my Ravenſdale! thou precious remains of my dear Lætitia! let me fold thee to my boſom."

"My

"My mother! my benefactreſs!" replied Edward, "it is but this day that I have diſcovered the tender relationſhip in which I ſtand towards you." After a mutual embrace, which nature demanded without any regard to the forms of ceremony, Edward continued: "Here, Madam, is the only mother whom till this day I have ever known; here are the parents who foſtered my helpleſs infancy, and reared me up to the ſtate of manhood in which you now ſee me."

Mrs. Waldron could not behold the nurturers of her grandſon without the tendereſt emotions; ſhe thanked them over and over again with tears of gratitude, and bleſſed God, who, by reſtoring Edward to his long loſt rights, would enable him to repay their piety and affection. She now ſaluted Doctor Burton, whom ſhe always revered, and whom ſhe was particularly rejoiced to find there; and being ſomewhat overpowered with the variety and the

greatneſs of her emotions, ſhe ſat down.—Mrs. Evans ordered back the tea-things, and would not permit Edward to fatigue Mrs. Waldron with anſwering his enquiries until ſhe had taken ſome refreſhment. "You know," ſaid ſhe, "you have been accuſtomed to obey me, and I will not give up my authority the firſt moment that another puts in their claim to it." "My dear mother!" ſaid Edward, taking her by the hand, "your authority ſhall not loſe its weight with me while I live. I cannot expreſs the joy my heart conceives in ſeeing the two to whom I am moſt indebted upon earth, now ſitting together for the firſt time." "My Ravenſdale!" ſaid Mrs. Waldron, "for I can aſſure you, Edward, that title belongs to you, my joy in this meeting is not inferior to your own; for I muſt ever feel myſelf bound by ties of unutterable gratitude to thoſe who have ſuſtained my child for three-and-twenty years, and now reſtore him to me, every thing my heart could

could wiſh." The tea now again made its appearance, and Edward reſumed his aſſiſtance, whilſt the two ladies viewed him with eyes of equal tranſport and affection.

When this ſecond tea-drinking was over, Ned ventured to reſume his enquiries about Lady Cecilia and Lord Ravenſdale.

"Cecilia," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, "is well; but as for Lord Ravenſdale, you muſt no longer give that title to the hoary hypocrite who has uſurped it—that title, Edward, is your own; and God be thanked that I have lived to ſee his juſtice manifeſtly diſplayed in reſtoring it to you!" "That the title will be mine, my mother, I cannot doubt, after all that I have heard; but if you regard my feelings, I beſeech you not to call me by it, until it is recognized by parliament; and far leſs to reflect on that venerable character, for whom I muſt ever retain the moſt heartfelt gratitude and affection; who was a noble friend and benefactor to me when I

ſtood in need of both; and who, if he erred in aſſuming the title, has made ample amends by the open and candid manner in which I underſtand he diſclaims it."—— "Why—yes, Edward, he does diſclaim it; and I can tell you he is prepared to acknowledge you as the true poſſeſſor of it."— "How did that happen?" ſaid Edward; "it is but this day that we have known it here ourſelves."—"To tell you the truth, my Edward, I did ſuſpect it from the firſt day I ſaw you at Glendemus; and though I could not account for it, I did communicate my ſuſpicions to Miſs Walker, and in ſome meaſure even to yourſelf."

"Yes, my mother!" ſaid Edward, "I did indeed take notice of ſome expreſſions which ſeemed to cover ſome myſterious meaning which I did not comprehend, and which you did not think proper to reveal; and it was but this evening that I was mentioning them to the preſent company; and

I am

I am ſure you will gratify both them and me extremely if you will explain the cauſe of your ſurmiſe."

"Until the day I ſaw you, Edward," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, "I always conceived the ſtory ſo artfully obtruded on the world of my grandchild's death to be a genuine truth; and I felt myſelf, as I conceived, infinitely indebted to what I thought a noble generoſity, which conferred upon me a penſion after my poor Lætitia's death, which had been ſettled upon her: but now I find all this generoſity was a bribe to Heaven to cover the moſt atrocious iniquity, which, however, the juſtice and the purity of Heaven would no longer conceal. The firſt day I had the pleaſure of ſeeing you at my houſe (Oh! may that day be bleſſed! and bleſſed be the power who ſaved you from the boiſterous element, to put you under my protection!)—the firſt day, my Edward, that I ſaw you, recovered from your fatigue, and ſhining with man-

ly grace, though disfigured in a jacket and trowsers, that day I was struck with the surprising resemblance which I thought I beheld in you to my poor deceased daughter Rivers. You chanced to take up a guitar which had once been hers, and sang a Scotch air, which you accompanied on the instrument. It had been a favourite air with her; and allowing for the difference between a man's voice and a woman's, there were so many turns which strongly reminded me of her, that here again I was impressed, even to astonishment. I know not whether there are any secret instincts of nature, which by some inexplicable sympathy can draw the affections of a parent to an unknown child; but I am sure I felt something like this, and conceived a tenderness for you, which I never felt for any other being, except my daughter. I was no stranger to the gallant services you performed for her whom we used to call Lady Cecilia Rivers—to

your

your paſſion for that amiable girl, nor to the unbounded and diſintereſted love with which ſhe repays it. Her brother dies; and then I found you likely to ſucceed to all that property by your union with her, which, had my grandchild lived, would have been his of right. Surely, thought I, he is my child; and God, in his own way and time, is reſtoring him to his inheritance. This was an abiding impreſſion on my mind, which I neither could, nor indeed deſired to get rid of; but the matter was of ſo delicate a nature, and involved in it ſo many important conſequences, that until I had more conviction, I thought it imprudent to ſay any thing upon the ſubject. I determined, however, in my own mind, to take a journey to this place, to enquire from my new and ever to be valued friends, if you were indeed their ſon. Whilſt this was in my thoughts, the ſtings of conſcience diſcloſed to my reverend friend here, Doctor Burton, that ſecret

iniquity

iniquity which it could no longer bear, and the circumſtances of which I firſt learned from the vile agent in the buſineſs, Laurence Flinn. This was farther confirmed by the letter which Doctor Burton wrote from Dublin immediately upon finding out Michael Carroll; relating the circumſtance of the child's having been dropped with a clergyman in Wales, and his intention of immediately going thither to enquire about it. This poor Cecilia in the candour of her heart confeſſed to me; and never were my ears bleſſed with ſuch joyful ſounds, for then the whole myſtery was unravelled, and I in my turn acknowledged to her the ſuſpicions I had for ſome time entertained, and filled her with inexpreſſible delight when I aſſured her that our Edward here was the man.

Upon the ſtrength of this, ſhe conducted me to her father. I own I went filled with reſentment, and determined to upbraid him with his perfidious ſupplanting of

my

my child, and depriving me for ſo many years of the conſolation of a mother.—But when I beheld the miſerable ſhadow of him whom I uſed to contemplate with reverence and affection; when I ſaw ſorrow and contrition deeply marked upon his countenance; and above all, when the beautiful and amiable Cecilia was ſtanding by my ſide, bathed in tears, I own my reſentments were diſarmed, and I told the old man, 'I am come to ſpeak peace to your ſoul, and to bring you forgiveneſs both from God and from myſelf.' I then related to him all my own ſurmiſings, before his own uneaſineſs of mind had diſcloſed any thing of the matter, and aſſured him he might conſole himſelf with the firm belief that he would find in Edward the only, yet the certain remedy to heal his broken heart. A viſible gleam of joy brightened his countenance at theſe words. "God grant it!" ſaid he; "that young man has been long

dear

dear to me; and if he ſhould turn out to be the child I have injured, I ſhall no longer lament thoſe whom God has taken from me, but conſider this new gift as a ſign of pardon and returning favour." The eaſe that this information gave him has conſiderably recruited his ſtrength and ſpirits; and when I told him that I was coming here directly to ſearch this matter to the bottom, he determined himſelf to ſet off for Dublin the next day with Cecilia, where, I make no doubt, they now are, impatiently expecting to ſee us all return."

Edward, with ſome eagerneſs, whiſpered Mrs. Waldron, " Have you no word from her ladyſhip for me?"—" No," replied ſhe, " not a ſyllable: Cecilia's ſituation is now changed; and it will henceforth belong to your lordſhip to beſtow thoſe great advantages which her generous and faithful heart was once willing to confer on you; and which I am ſure ſhe would not receive from

from any other hand. "Oh! that I was at her feet," ſaid Edward, "to make offer of myſelf and all that I ſhall ever poſſeſs on earth!"

"You muſt ſoon be ſo," replied Doctor Burton; "this alliance was indeed ſometimes talked of in the country, and I for one always wiſhed it ſucceſs: but now it becomes indiſpenſable; for the marriage ſeems to have been already made in heaven." "We will conſummate it on earth then," ſaid Edward, with a ſmile; to which both the reverend gentlemen replied, "Amen!"

Evans now related to Mrs. Waldron all thoſe little circumſtances relative to his firſt finding Edward which ſhe had not yet heard, and brought her the little frock which he had on when he firſt ſaw him. Mrs. Waldron looked at it, and wept.— "This frock," ſaid ſhe, "is my own work; it was one of many others which I made for

for my poor Lætitia againſt her lying-in.—Here," ſaid ſhe, "I could ſwear to the ſtitching of theſe guſſets in any part of the world." Some tender emotions, which the ſight of this frock and the recollections connected with it cauſed, now viſibly appeared in Mrs. Waldron's eyes, which Edward endeavoured to divert, by begging her to keep the frock for the little lord whom Cecilia ſhould in due time preſent her; adding, "it was a pity ſuch beautiful work ſhould have been ſo long concealed." This turn reſtored her to her ſpirits, and enabled her to ſpend a charming evening, when Edward ſung, after ſupper, ſome delightful Scotch and Welch airs, and joined with Doctor Burton and Evans in ſeveral catches and glees; ſo that perhaps this was the happieſt night that ſeveral of the company, though advanced in years, had ever paſſed. To Edward himſelf it certainly was ſo, though far ſhort of many which we hope

fortune

fortune has yet in ſtore for him, and to the enjoyment of which we ſhall conduct him with all the ſpeed that is compatible with the neceſſity of letting the good Doctor Burton and Mrs. Waldron repoſe a little after their journey.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXVI.

IN the humble dwelling of Ti-gwin, there was ſome difficulty in finding accommodation for all this good company who had ſo unexpectedly met together. Mrs. Evans however contrived it ſomehow or other, packing Edward with her huſband, whom he ſtill (and probably ever will continue to do) called his father, and whom he told as he went to bed, "that he was glad of that opportunity to introduce his new coronet to his old night-cap." Evans replied, "he was ſorry his coronet ſhould keep ſuch bad company, but hoped ſoon to turn his night-cap into a mitre, when they would be fitter companions for each other."—Thus did theſe two deareſt of friends manifeſt how little they were to be intoxicated by any worldly advantages, and

ſoon

ſoon ſunk into that ſtate which, next to death, is the greateſt leveller of diſtinctions, and which prefers a night-cap both to a coronet and a mitre.

In the morning the ſame happy company met again to breakfaſt, refreſhed with their night's ſleep, and perfectly in health both in mind and body. It was determined to continue that day at Ti-gwin, and all of them ſet off the day after for Dublin, the preſence of Mr. and Mrs. Evans being neceſſary to aſcertain the great diſcovery they had made. Carroll, with his attendants, was ſent off that ſame day, to be ſtill however detained as witneſſes, but with an aſſurance that no evil could happen to him, as there really did not appear in him any guilt.

And now Edward having ſome viſits which he wiſhed to pay, ordered his horſes, whilſt Evans took Doctor Burton to ſhew him his garden, which he cultivated with his own hands, and Mrs. Evans entertained

Mrs.

Mrs. Waldron with a thouſand anecdotes of Edward's ſweetneſs from his earlieſt infancy even to that day; to which ſhe liſtened with that ſecret rapture, with which we may ſuppoſe a mother to be delighted on the firſt diſcovery of her child. Whilſt the good Mrs. Evans was thus fondly deſcanting on Edward's virtues, and particularly dwelling on his early piety and juſt ſenſe of religion, Fortune, which is always a ſlippery jade, played her a trick, and ſent the little Edward into the room, to the great ſurpriſe of Mrs. Evans, who had ſtrictly charged the maid to keep him out of ſight. The child, to be ſure, looked as beautiful as any that Nature ever ſent from her hand; and Mrs. Waldron, who loved all children, ran to embrace it. "Whoſe is this pretty creature?" ſaid ſhe to Mrs. Evans. Mrs. Evans bluſhed, and was ſilent. The child called her grandmama.—"Oh!" ſaid Mrs. Waldron, who was quick in diſcerning countenances, "I believe, my dear madam,

madam, that our friend's ſenſe of piety and religion has not always been equally uniform." "It is true," ſaid Mrs. Evans; "in this one inſtance he has erred, and I believe from my ſoul in this one only. He confeſſed this to his father, as the dear youth then thought Mr. Evans; and this little creature was born a few months after he left us: I took him as the memorial of my Edward, whoſe perfect image he is; and I intend never to part with him."— "You muſt part with him a few minutes to me, however," ſaid Mrs. Waldron, who took him up in her arms, and almoſt devoured him with kiſſes. "We cannot approve of theſe children, to be ſure," ſaid ſhe; "but, oh Nature! who is able to reſiſt your laws?" She then enquired about the mother, and it was agreed between her and Mrs. Evans that ſhe ſhould take no notice of having ſeen the child to Edward. She, however, enquired for the ſervant who took care of him, and gave her five guineas to

encourage

encourage her in her attention. Poor little Edward was remanded to his retreat; and the maid, who perhaps brought him into view with the very expectation which ſo well ſucceeded, went with him perfectly pleaſed.

In the mean time Edward arrived at the cottage in which poor Molly Price, the mother of his ſweet infant, reſided; ſhe had heard of his great exaltation, as indeed news ſo extraordinary is ſeldom ſlow in finding wings, and almoſt deſpaired that he would now beſtow a thought upon her:— but when he entered the door, ſhe beheld the ſame ſweet countenance which firſt won her virgin heart, and which received in return the ſame tribute of maiden innocence. The meeting was tender, as was ſuited to both their natures, and virtuous as became the relative ſituations in which they were both of them now placed. Molly indeed was employed, when he entered, in the tendereſt office of nature, ſuckling the little

infant ſhe had borne about two months before to her huſband. Ned aſked how he behaved to her, and whether ſhe was happy? She replied, that no huſband could behave better, that he gave her all his earnings, and that ſhe ſhould be as happy as perhaps any in her ſtation could be, if ſhe could forget—"Alas, Molly!" replied he, "rather ſay, if you could forgive."—"Forgive!" ſaid ſhe; "whom have I to forgive?"—"Me," ſaid Edward. "Oh! Mr. Evans!" ſaid ſhe, "if I do not miſtake in calling you by that name, I have no complaint to make of you; it was my own heart betrayed me; and if you did wrong, I ſurely was alike to blame."—"The fault," ſaid Edward, "perhaps was mutual; but to repair it as far as I can, with reſpect to you, muſt be my part." He then ſent her to fetch her huſband, and with that condeſcending ſweetneſs which characterized all his actions, rocked the cradle, in which ſhe had juſt laid her infant, till ſhe

returned. The huſband, whoſe name was Richard Parry, was a ſtrapping young fellow about his own age, well enough featured, and caſt in that mould which nature wiſely thought beſt ſuited to his condition. Edward told the young man, he had ſent for him becauſe he wiſhed him well, and becauſe he wiſhed to ſee him and his wife together, as he knew he had had a regard for her before he had married her. Richard replied, he was not ignorant that Molly had had a misfortune, which many another honeſt girl had as well as ſhe; but that ſhe made him a good wife; and as he did every thing to make her happy that was in his power, he hoped ſhe would be grateful, and remain true to him. Edward commended the ſentiment, and added, that it ſhould be his care to ſupply them with ſome of the ingredients which in the general opinion of the world were eſſential to happineſs.

He then briefly told them of his being to return

return to Ireland the next day, where he had the proſpect of a conſiderable property; and that, as he did not intend immediately to take the child over, he would commit it to the care of its mother, ſending with it however a ſervant; and to enable them to do this with eaſe, he told down fifty guineas, which he preſented to Molly, in the preſence of her huſband. Neither Richard nor Molly had ever ſeen ſo much money before at one time, and were expecting nothing leſs than to be the owners of ſuch a ſum; they received it with expreſſions ſuitable to their ſurpriſe and gratitude, and Edward took leave of them, promiſing to be ſtill more permanently uſeful to them, as long as their good conduct ſhould entitle them to his regard. From Molly's Ned went to the old veteran her father, whom he had not yet ſeen ſince his return. They had been ancient friends, Ned having ſpent many an hour in his days of boyhood, liſtening to his harp, and learning

from him to touch the ſtrings himſelf. When old John heard that he was in the houſe, he inwardly rejoiced, for he loved Edward in his heart, though he could not help charging him with ſomewhat of unkindneſs for the tune he had played with his daughter. Ned made the beſt excuſe he was able, which he ſtrengthened by a powerful argument, ſimilar in kind, though leſs in force, with that which he had juſt uſed with Molly, and thus regained the friendſhip and good wiſhes of the old man.

He invited John up to the houſe, to get his dinner and a cup of good ale in the kitchen, and ordered him to fetch his harp, which the good old ſoul immediately ſet about tuning, that he might give them a ſpecimen of his performance. In his way home he called upon Mr. and Mrs. Watkin, who however were abſent at their daughter Colebroke's, ſhe having lately lain in, and her firſt child, a boy, was to be chriſtened. Ned was ſorry that by this accident,

cident, and his unexpected return ſo ſoon to Ireland, he miſſed ſeeing them at this time, altogether; and ſo, without prolonging his ride further, he went home. When he got in, he found his mother, that is Mrs. Evans, buſily employed among her trunks. The journey ſhe was next day to undertake, appeared to that good woman like a voyage to the Eaſt Indies; nor is it to be wondered at, ſince the circuit of her whole travels might be compriſed in a circle of forty miles diameter. To quit Wales therefore, was in ſome degree to her like quitting the world; and was a journey, which on her own account nothing would have tempted her to undertake; but to which ſhe looked forward with leſs dread, when ſhe reflected on the great object that was to be accompliſhed by it, and that ſhe ſhould be accompanied by all ſhe held moſt dear in the world. When Edward ſaw her preparations, he could not help ſmiling; he prevailed upon her, however, to undo

all ſhe had been doing, by aſſuring her ſhe would have no occaſion for any thing but her body linen, and a couple of gowns; as all the reſt ſhe held moſt valuable ſhe would find of no uſe but to make pincuſhions or work-bags of; and that in future ſhe muſt look to him for all things neceſſary. He then told her he had ſeen Molly Price, and that he had determined to leave the child with her, till there was a more proper time to take it to Ireland. Mrs. Evans agreed in the propriety of this, though ſhe was determined to come back and live with it, rather than want it; but Edward aſſuring her ſhe ſhould have it at her own diſpoſal, ſhe was eaſy; and having replaced all the things in their repoſitories, where many of them had lain unmoleſted for thirty years, ſhe packed up thoſe only which Ned recommended, and then went to ſuperintend the diſhing of the dinner.

Farewell, ye temperate and ſimple meals, as delicious as ye were wholeſome!—Farewell,

well, ye mountain flocks, able to pleaſe the palate of Apicius!—Farewell, ye ſavoury ſteams of toaſted cheeſe, converted to a rabbit by the power of a toaſt and nut-brown ale! This is the laſt day we ſhall be allowed to regale upon your ſimple luxuries. But often amidſt the pomp of plate, and of attendants; often amidſt the puzzling variety of unknown diſhes, ſhall we remember with regret the pleaſant though ſmall parlour of Ti-gwin, its neat though unadorned ſide-board, its hoſpitable though ſimple entertainment.

Perhaps the thoughts of this being the laſt dinner they might ever eat together in that room, which for more than twenty years had witneſſed the happineſs of their domeſtic intercourſe, might in ſome degree have depreſſed the ſpirits of our honeſt curate and his amiable wife, notwithſtanding the brilliancy of thoſe ſcenes which were juſt opening to their view. But Ned, aware of this effect, called in the all-

powerful aid of muſic, to chaſe away all melancholy. And having ſeated Price in a corner, ſupported by a noble flaggon of ale on his right hand, and David Morgan to help him to it on the other, and puſhing with unuſual gaiety at his own table the warming juice of Oporto's grape, ſorrow was baniſhed from all hearts; and the hours, winged with joy, and beguiled by muſic, flew uncounted. Poor Price himſelf, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, was the firſt that tired, but not till ſuch an hour as juſtified all in thinking of their repoſe. The honeſt old fellow had no reaſon to repent his evening's entertainment; he was well paid for the amuſement he afforded, and the good-natured curate lent him old Blackbird to carry himſelf and his harp home under the guidance of David Morgan.

In the morning two chaiſes, as ordered the day before, were ready at the door by eight. It was however ten before the good Mrs. Evans had adjuſted all her concerns,

and

and given the important charges ſhe thought neceſſary to David Morgan's father and mother, whom ſhe left to take care of the houſe; her laſt buſineſs was to ſteal up to the room in which little Edward ſtayed, and to water his little cheeks with her tears: but the thoughts of ſoon either ſending for him, or returning to him, conſoled her; and after being twice or thrice called for by the good curate, ſhe at laſt went down, and was handed by Edward into the chaiſe, where Mrs. Waldron had been ſeated ten minutes before. Doctor Burton and Mr. Evans went in the other chaiſe; and Edward and David Morgan, mounted on Brilliant and Beliſarius, drew up the rear.

They continued their journey without any accident, and arrived at Holyhead time enough to get a tolerably comfortable dinner before the packet ſailed in the evening. About ſix they were informed it was time to go on board. It was dark, and the weather rather ſqually. Mrs. Evans was

frighted, and would have gladly turned back again for Ti-gwin; but Mrs. Waldron aſſuring her that no packet had been loſt within any perſon's recollection, ſhe ſuffered Edward to conduct her on board; and the two ladies being accommodated with one of the ſtate rooms, they went immediately to their births together.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXVII.

IT was ſaid of the old ducheſs of Bedford, that being aſked on her return from Ireland (where her huſband had been Lord Lieutenant), how ſhe liked that country? ſhe replied, "there was one good thing in it, there was always a fair wind to carry you out of it." Her Grace's aſſertion could not be contradicted by the experience of our preſent voyagers. The wind certainly blew from that kingdom, and ſeemed determined to give them all the oppoſition, in their approach to it, that was in its power. Edward, who was now ſo well accuſtomed to the ſea, as not to be incommoded by its higheſt rage, as long as he was in a good ſhip, and had ſea room, would not have minded its preſent turbulence, but for the terrors of all the female

paſſengers, and the ſickneſs with which both Evans and Doctor Burton were affected. He paſſed the whole night in aſſiſting them, and indeed every perſon elſe in the cabin, and in ſoothing all the ladies, whoſe terrors at the perpetual cry of "luff! luff!" and the thumps which the veſſel received as ſhe buffeted the waves, were often expreſſed in ſcreams, which he did all in his power to compoſe: at length towards morning the wind abated, and grew ſomewhat more favourable, ſo that about two o'clock the next afternoon they paſſed the bar, and in leſs than an hour were landed at the Pigeon Houſe. Here they ſoon got a coach, which they ordered to drive to the Marine Hotel.

Edward profited by his experience in his firſt voyage to Ireland, ſo as not to be a ſecond time taken in by the officious impoſtors who never fail to ſurround ſtrangers on their firſt landing, and conducted Mrs. Waldron and Mrs. Evans, with the good

good curate, into the houſe, where he got them a comfortable room and ſome refreſhment. Mrs. Waldron and Doctor Burton went together in a coach to Lord Ravenſdale's, to acquaint him and Cecilia with the arrival of Edward and the Evanses, and the happy and important diſcovery they had made. Edward remained with Mr. and Mrs. Evans to allow time for this communication, and that they might get themſelves a little in order after their voyage, before they ſhould be introduced to his Lordſhip. In about an hour Lord Ravenſdale's coach came for them to the hotel, and Evans and his wife were, for the firſt time in their lives, ſeated in a carriage with a coronet. Edward got in after them, and I will leave it to my readers to imagine the feelings of his heart as they turned into Merrion Square, and approached Lord Ravenſdale's houſe. The carriage ſtopped, and the porter opened the door. Two footmen in laced liveries were behind the carriage. Edward alighted,

ed, and handed Mrs. Evans up the ſteps; the good curate followed, and Doctor Burton met them in the hall. In the drawing-room they were received with all the emotions of the ſincereſt friendſhip by Lady Cecilia, who took Mrs. Evans by both her hands and kiſſed her, and who conferred the ſame favour on Evans himſelf. The worthy curate was ſomewhat abaſhed, and endeavoured at a bow in the beſt ſtyle he could. Edward ſmiled, and juſt 'got a glance of Cecilia's eye, which dropped and trembled as it met his. He was going to approach her, when Doctor Burton whiſpered to him, that the old Lord wiſhed to ſee him in his dreſſing-room. "Will you come with me?" ſaid Edward. "Yes," ſaid the Doctor; "I mean to accompany you." As he went out, Ned turned his face towards Cecilia, whoſe eyes again met his. The intelligence they communicated was inſtantly underſtood by both, and more expreſſive than

any

any language could convey. When Edward entered the room, the old Lord roſe, viſibly in much emotion. Edward advanced towards him, and dropped upon one knee at his feet: the old Lord claſped him in his arms, and wept aloud. "Weep not, my Lord!" ſaid Edward, "I hoped that my return would have wiped away all tears from your eyes." "They are tears of joy," ſaid the old man, "tears which waſh away from my ſoul a burthen which has oppreſſed it for more than twenty years. Come then to my arms, my deliverer! and let me reſtore you to thoſe riches and honours, of which I baſely wronged you; which have well nigh brought me to perdition, but which will ſit light and eaſy on their true poſſeſſor." "My Lord!" ſaid Edward, "I requeſt"—"My Lord Ravenſdale!" interrupted the other, "I beſeech you no longer to call me by a title which it was my ſhame to have been ever known by; but which I here reſign with ten

thouſand

thouſand times more pleaſure than I aſſumed it, which truly belongs to your Lordſhip, and which I have already taken ſteps to put you in the legal poſſeſſion of." "How then am I to call you?' ſaid Edward. "Call me Rivers, call me what you pleaſe, call me any thing but Lord Ravenſdale." "Oh!" ſaid Edward, "there is a name which if you would allow me to call you by, would fill up the meaſure of my happineſs, and without which all the honours and riches you are ſhowering upon me will be but ſplendid miſery." "Say, then, what is it?" "Let me call you father. Let me lay theſe new acquired poſſeſſions at the feet of your charming daughter, who has long been the miſtreſs of my ſoul, and let me have your ſanction to requeſt her ſharing them with me." "My Lord! (ſaid Colonel Rivers, by which name we muſt in future call him) if any circumſtance could increaſe the ſatisfaction which I feel this day, in reſtoring to your

Lordſhip

Lordſhip your long uſurped rights, it would be the happy alliance you have now done me the honour to propoſe." Edward, or rather Lord Ravenſdale, which title he from henceforth muſt aſſume, was going to expreſs his gratitude, when the old Colonel interrupted him, by propoſing to go down directly to the Ladies, to introduce him in his proper character, and that he himſelf might be introduced to Evans and his wife. "My Cecilia!" ſaid he, as he entered the room, "let me preſent to you the Earl of Ravenſdale, who, by coming to that title, has ſomewhat abated the rank which you have been accuſtomed to move in, but who, with a gallantry inſeparable from a great ſpirit, entreats your acceptance of a higher." Cecilia bluſhed, but yielded her willing lips to the fervent kiſs, which the young Earl then impreſſed upon them. As all the company were now connected in the deareſt ties either of friendſhip or of conſanguinity, this happy diſcloſure

ſure of the intended marriage was received with mutual congratulations and fervent joy. Mrs. Waldron and Mrs. Evans gazed on Edward, in whom they thought they had an equal claim, with rapture, and joined his hand to Cecilia's with the moſt heart-felt ſatisfaction. Indeed the marriage might have been ſolemnized on the ſpot, as there were two clergymen preſent, and all the parties were agreed; but the Colonel wiſhed firſt to have the matter of the peerage ſettled. The parliament was to meet in a few days, and on the firſt day of it Edward's claim to the title was laid before the Houſe. As the whole matter had been previouſly made known to the Chancellor and the other Law Lords, there was little difficulty in aſcertaining it, and he took his ſeat, as Earl of Ravenſdale, a few days before the Chriſtmas receſs. On that ſame day the biſhop of Limerick, who had long lived in habits of the greateſt intimacy with the Ravenſdale family, and in whoſe

dioceſe the eſtate of Ravenſdale lay, went home from the Houſe with Colonel Rivers, in order to be introduced to the new Earl, and dined with him: Cecilia did the honours of the table, and looked like beauty itſelf. Doctor Burton had been long acquainted with the biſhop, but Evans had never ſeen him before, and was now introduced to his lordſhip by the colonel, with that eulogium on his character which it juſtly deſerved; and the biſhop received him with every token of reſpect. His lordſhip was the only perſon preſent that was not of the family; and after the cloth was removed, and a long and happy enjoyment of his titles and eſtate drank to the new Lord, who had that day taken his ſeat, he roſe, and expreſſed his deſire, that as he then really felt himſelf, for the firſt time, to be the poſſeſſor of thoſe titles, which he had been accuſtomed to revere and love in thoſe who had formerly enjoyed them, he wiſhed to crown the happineſs

and

and juſtice of that day, by laying thoſe titles and poſſeſſions at the feet of her who had long poſſeſſed his heart, and by reſtoring to her that rank in ſociety which he had been ſo unexpectedly the cauſe of her loſing. Colonel Rivers ſeconded the motion, while Cecilia, covered with bluſhes, was yet too ingenuous to invent delays, for what had been already agreed on, and which ſhe had ſo often confeſſed to be the wiſh of her heart. The biſhop claimed the right of performing the ceremony. "I," ſaid his Lordſhip, "gave her her firſt name, and I ſhall rejoice ſtill more to add this new title to it."

Cecilia retired with Mrs. Waldron and Mrs. Evans, and a little before tea came down to the drawing-room, arrayed in a ſimple gown of white muſlin. Her lovely treſſes were bound with a ſtring of oriental pearls, and hung down her back in natural curls, gloſſy as the richeſt ſilk; unſtained with powder, and unconſtrained by the diſfigur-

ing

ing art of the hair-dreſſer. The young Lord Ravenſdale, in whoſe countenance the ſweetneſs and modeſty of Ned Evans ſtill beamed with unaltered luſtre, ſtood up beſide her, and exhibited a perſon which no painter or ſtatuary would have diſdained to ſtudy, as a model of male beauty. The biſhop read the ſervice with all dignity ſuited to ſo ſolemn and ſacred an obligation, and a little before ſeven pronounced that bleſſing, which joined in holy union two bodies, whoſe ſouls were united long before, and whom Heaven itſelf by its almoſt miraculous interference ſeemed to have created for each other.

No marriage that was ever ſolemnized ſeemed to give more perfect ſatisfaction to all concerned; the old colonel recovered all his uſual gaiety and ſpirits; joked with Lady Ravenſdale and the other ladies with a flow of humour which he had not exhibited for many years, and prolonged the feſtivity of the evening with the biſhop and the

the two reverend gentlemen to a late hour; long after that which admitted Edward to the paradiſe of Cecilia's arms.

Theſe important events being all happily adjuſted, and the Chriſtmas receſs approaching, the young Lord Ravenſdale and his bride wiſhed to go down to their ſeat in the country, to diſpenſe, at that rigorous ſeaſon of the year, the bleſſings which ought always to accompany the feſtival, among their tenants and dependants; and to enjoy, amidſt the ſhades of Ravenſdale, thoſe ſerene raptures for which both their boſoms were formed, but to which the noiſe and parade of the capital were little accommodated. Colonel Rivers joined moſt heartily in this intention, for he was always fond of a rural and retired life, and ſeldom went to Dublin except when his parliamentary duties called him thither. Of theſe he had now taken leave for ever; for though he might command a ſeat in the houſe of commons, yet having been ſo

long a member of the houſe of lords, he thought the ſituation would be ſomewhat awkward. His intention was to live in future at his own ſeat of Riversfield, about nine miles from Ravenſdale, excepting the time he might ſpend with his daughter, and which both ſhe and her lord deſired to be as much as they could prevail on him to beſtow. In the diſpoſal of their affairs they had no occaſion for the interference or delay of lawyers. The colonel ſurrendered all the Ravenſdale eſtates, together with a great ſum of money which he had ſaved out of them, to the young Lord, together with the houſe in Dublin and all its furniture, his horſes, carriages, &c. and all the family plate. He reſerved to himſelf his own paternal eſtate, which he had improved to be worth near three thouſand pounds a-year; and this too at his death was to go to his daughter and her children.

The next day but one after the marriage, the whole family took leave of Dublin.

Lord

Lord and Lady Ravenſdale went in their own travelling chaiſe and four, attended by David Morgan riding Beliſarius, and leading Brilliant. Colonel Rivers and Evans, with Mrs. Waldron and Mrs. Evans, went in a poſt-coach which had been his before, and was now alſo Lord Ravenſdale's. Doctor Burton remained in town for a few days, but promiſed to be at Ravenſdale with Mrs. Burton and Lady Ravenſdale's dear friend Sophia, very ſhortly after they got there. At ſo late a ſeaſon of the year, the journey could not well be performed under three days. The tenants had notice of their approach, an innumerable crowd of whom met their young Lord at the gates of Ravenſdale Park, and, taking out the horſes, drew his carriage to the houſe. They paid the ſame compliment to the Colonel, whom they always loved, and whom they cheered with three huzzas as he got out of the carriage. The whole company ſtood a few minutes

on

on the ſteps, where the young Lord expreſſed his gratitude for the affectionate reception they had given him, and the ſatisfaction he felt in obſerving the eſteem and regard they manifeſted to their late maſter, in whoſe ſteps it ſhould be his pride and ambition to walk. He preſented to them Lady Ravenſdale, whom they had long known and revered in another character, and whom they now welcomed with the loudeſt acclamations. Her Ladyſhip made them a low and graceful curtſy, and they were all invited into the great hall, where a barrel of ſtrong ale was broached, which they emptied with flowing cans and ſincere hearts—to the health and proſperity of the Houſe of Ravenſdale.

CHAP. LXVIII.

WE might here have cloſed this narrative, having brought the hero of it to the ſummit of earthly felicity, by means which diſcover the ſecret direction of Providence in the affairs of this world; and how his almighty hand can make the unruly paſſions of ſinful men ſubſervient to the moſt righteous purpoſes; and events ſeemingly trifling and accidental, yet in the great chain of cauſes and effects to lead to the moſt important conſequences. This indeed is a truth which we have long had occaſion to obſerve ourſelves, and which we have endeavoured in this ſtory to impreſs upon the minds of our readers. Before we take our final leave, however, it may be pleaſing to ſome, to know what became of thoſe who

have appeared as ſubordinate characters in this work.

Among the firſt viſitors who came to pay their reſpects at Ravenſdale-houſe, was Captain Nettlefield, who perhaps could not have induced his proud and envious ſpirit to pay any compliment to Edward in his new character, did not the neceſſity of his affairs require it. He appeared before him with all the ſervile awe with which conſcious wickedneſs is always overwhelmed in the preſence of virtue. Edward knew his character well, and always deſpiſed it; he had himſelf received the baſeſt of injuries from him, but he nobly thought that it did not become the Earl of Ravenſdale to remember the wrongs offered to Ned Evans; and he therefore ſhewed him a greater civility and reſpect than he would otherwiſe probably have been tempted to do, and aſked him to ſtay dinner. Nettlefield accepted the invitation, and in the evening, when his heart had been ſomewhat

warmed by a bottle of the beſt claret, he deſired to ſpeak to Lord Ravenſdale alone. His Lordſhip took him up to the library, where he uſually ſat in the morning; and Nettlefield began by profeſſing his extreme contrition for his conduct towards him in America, which he acknowledged to be baſe and unmanly, but which he begged his Lordſhip to aſcribe to the effect of ſudden rage, which was an unfortunate diſpoſition interwoven in his conſtitution, and not to any premeditated malice, which his ſoul abhorred:—that beſides this, which had long lain upon his mind, there was another buſineſs which made him ſolicitous for the honour of this interview, and which he had his father's commands to lay before him, and this was the unhappy ſituation of his affairs. He then entered into a detail of the incumbrances, which amounted to near ten thouſand pounds, to be paid out of an eſtate of ſix hundred pounds per annum. Mr. Nettlefield concluded with

ſtating,

ſtating, " that as ſix thouſand pounds of this money was due to his Lordſhip himſelf, and as there was no poſſibility of ſatisfying the other creditors without bringing the eſtate to an immediate ſale, his father thought it his duty to make the firſt offer of it to his Lordſhip, in which he entirely concurred, and had therefore preſumed to wait upon him for that purpoſe."

Lord Ravenſdale replied, " As to what paſſed between us in America, Captain Nettlefield, I have long ſince forgotten, as well as forgiven it; and I deſire to ſhake hands with you upon this ſubject, and never to let a ſyllable about it eſcape from either of our mouths again. As for the derangement of your affairs, they give me great and real concern, as I do not ſee that if your eſtate is ſold there can be any reverſion adequate to the maintenance of the family." " It is true, my Lord," replied Nettlefield, " but there is no alternative; a ſmall reverſion there will be, and I muſt

remain at home, and aſſiſt my mother and my ſiſter with my pay." "I am happy to hear from your own mouth," ſaid Lord Ravenſdale, "a ſentiment ſo full of dutiful affection, which gives me hope that you will acknowledge the propriety as well as the neceſſity of what I ſhall now take the liberty to propoſe to you—

"I have the honour to be the intimate friend of Mr. Grainger, the very mention of whoſe name I ſee covers you with confuſion: his amiable and innocent daughter is no more; but a beautiful and lovely boy remains, of whom no parent ought to be aſhamed. If, Mr. Nettlefield, you will do juſtice to the memory of that unfortunate and much injured lady, and acknowledge your child, I will find means to ſave your eſtate, and to extricate your father from his difficulties."

"My Lord," ſaid Nettlefield, "I am indeed covered with confuſion; I ſtand before you ſelf-convicted, and ſelf-condemned. I acknow-

I acknowledge the unbounded generoſity with which you have treated me, and I beſeech you to believe that my heart is not ſo depraved but that I can love and eſteem virtue, though I have never yet been able to practiſe it. From this moment I beg leave to ſurrender myſelf to your Lordſhip's diſpoſal, entreating of you only to command me what to do, and I will do it."—"Do as you would be done by," ſaid Lord Ravenſdale; "there is no other command neceſſary: and let me aſſure you, Mr. Nettlefield, that if you will make this command the rule of all your future actions, you will find yourſelf not only more reſpected, but alſo much more happy than you have ever hitherto been." Nettlefield bowed, and withdrew.

Three years have now elapſed ſince his Lordſhip took poſſeſſion of his title and eſtates; and ſince his happy union with the beautiful and virtuous Cecilia, as many lovely children have crowned thoſe years—

a boy

a boy to inherit all his father's virtues—and two girls, the lovely likeneſſes of their all-accompliſhed mother. Nor is there any reaſon to doubt, but that, if Heaven ſhall pleaſe to ſpare the parents, many more young ſcions ſhall ariſe to continue the name and the virtues of the family.

Colonel Rivers is ſtill living, and ſpends much of his time with his daughter and her children. The moſt cordial friendſhip and affection ſubſiſts between Lord Ravenſdale and him; nor does his Lordſhip ever take an important ſtep either in public or in private life without conſulting his experience.

For two years the worthy Evans and his wife lived entirely at Ravenſdale-houſe, experiencing the ſame affection and the ſame dutiful attention from Lord Ravenſdale that he had ever ſhewn them when he thought himſelf their ſon. Laſt year the old vicar of the pariſh died, and the biſhop immediately preſented Evans to it. It is worth

worth a good ſix hundred a year; and he bids fair to be as much loved and reſpected by his congregation in Ireland, as he had ever been in Wales. He is at preſent buſily employed in making great additions to his garden, which are to connect with Lord Ravenſdale's pleaſure-gardens; ſo that he will have an extenſive range of the moſt beautiful ſcenery, in a manner within his own premiſes. The good old man continues to work himſelf in his garden, in which wholeſome exerciſe Lord Ravenſdale often delights to ſhare, and aſſiſts him with the ſame pleaſure as when he called him his Ned Evans. The old woman and her ſon, who had been ſo hoſpitable to him the night of his diſappointment at Muckworm's, he has brought over from Wales, and they now live with him. John is a ſtout lad of about ſixteen, and he educates him for a gardener.

Mrs. Evans has aſſumed no new airs upon the great change in her ſituation; ſhe attends

as

as uſual upon her domeſtic concerns, and retains that happy evenneſs of temper which long endured poverty without repining, and now enjoys affluence without being extremely elated. Her chief care is indeed directed to the ſweet little cherub whom ſhe calls her grandſon; who lives entirely with her, and who is an exact counterpart, both in features and diſpoſition, of what her Edward was at his age. This circumſtance has endeared this child to her in an extreme degree, and ſhe ſeems to have transferred to him that tenderneſs of maternal affection which ſhe felt ſo intenſely for his father. Nothing can place Lady Ravenſdale's heart in a more amiable point of view than her conduct to this child. It was by her expreſs deſire, and without her Lord's knowledge, that ſhe had him brought over from Wales, who never was more aſtoniſhed than when he ſaw him in her Ladyſhip's arms. It was an endearing compliment ſhe paid him, when ſhe preſented

the

the infant to his Lordſhip, and requeſted him, for her ſake, to provide for him as if he was hers. Lord Ravenſdale is now in treaty for the purchaſe of Ti-gwin eſtate, which is worth about five hundred pounds a-year, and which he intends to ſettle on the little Edward.

Mrs. Waldron ſpends part of every year with Lord and Lady Ravenſdale, but paſſes the ſummer for the moſt part at her own houſe of Glendemus. It is a charming retreat, and exquiſitely convenient for ſea-bathing. The children are uſually ſent there for a couple of months, to reap the advantage of that wholeſome practice; and Lord and Lady Ravenſdale uſually go for them, and bring them and Mrs. Waldron back to Ravenſdale-houſe. His Lordſhip has increaſed the annuity which Mrs. Waldron enjoyed, to five hundred pounds a-year—a ſum which is fully adequate to all her wants and wiſhes. David Morgan renewed his addreſſes to Molly Doran, and

was

was too handſome a fellow, and too advantageous a match for her, to be long in gaining her conſent. Lord Ravenſdale has ſet him up in a farm, of which he has given him a leaſe for his own life, and two ſons, whom Molly has already borne him; and he is likely to ſucceed well. The old woman, his mother-in-law, lives with him, and ſhe had laſt year the conſolation to ſee her ſon return from America. Doran immediately waited on Lord Ravenſdale, who received him as a brother warrior. He related the extreme grief of Awattahowee, when the time had elapſed for his return without his appearing: but the ſeaſon having turned out very fine for hunting, and Awattahowee being uncommonly ſucceſsful, he imputed it to the interceſſion of his dear friend Warbiſhcondar with the great ſpirit, and the whole nation got drunk at a grand feaſt of bear's broth and dog's fleſh, which he had given in gratitude to his memory. Lord Ravenſdale was well pleaſed

to

to hear this account of his friend's faithful attachment, and has placed Doran in a lucrative ſtation about his own perſon. Captain Nettlefield has kept the promiſe which he made to Lord Ravenſdale, and acknowledged his ſon Charles. His contrition appears ſo ſincere, that Mr. Grainger has been induced to ſee him, who has now built a ſmall houſe in the village of Ravenſdale, to be near his Lordſhip, whom he juſtly conſiders as his deareſt friend, and to ſuperintend the education of his grandſon. Old Nettlefield died of a paralytic ſtroke, about a year ago, by which his wife and daughter have been relieved from a moſt oppreſſive tyrant; and they are happy in the affectionate attention of their ſon and brother, who ſince his reconciliation with Lord Ravenſdale ſeems entirely reformed, and endeavours, within his ſphere, to form his manners after his example. By the united exertions of his Lordſhip and Mr. Grainger, all other creditors of the eſtate

are paid off, and the land is ſettled upon Charles. Under the wiſe and œconomical management of theſe truſtees, the eſtate will be clear before he comes of age; whilſt an annuity is reſerved for the family, on which they live with much more comfort and reſpectability than ever they did before.

Doctor Burton and his family are frequent viſitors at Ravenſdale-houſe, where Sophia in particular ſpends a great part of her time. An old attachment between her and Nettlefield is ſuſpected by ſome to be reviving; and if he continues to behave with as much propriety as he has done for theſe laſt three years, it is probable they may one day be united. He has many qualities to recommend him both to man and woman, to which if he could add virtue, he would be wholly unexceptionable.

And now, reader, having throughout theſe pages endeavoured to amuſe your mind

mind without injuring your heart, I truſt I have in ſome degree ſucceeded; and that the events here artleſsly related, ſome of which have really happened, and none of which tranſgreſs the bounds of nature or probability, may lead you to believe that the eyes of God are on the ways of men, and that he ſpieth out all their goings; that his Providence can, and does direct their minuteſt affairs, though without any miraculous or viſible interference; and that (as we are aſſured by the higheſt of all authorities), "though five ſparrows are ſold for a farthing, yet one of them ſhall not fall to the ground without our Father, who is in Heaven."

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM